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ENHANCING ACCESS AND SUCCESS OF UNDERSERVED
STUDENTS IN DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS.

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Education

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Education

By

Theodore O. Mbaegbu

May 2019

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Theodore Mbaegbu

May 2019

ENHANCING ACCESS AND SUCCESS OF UNDERSERVED STUDENTS
IN DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS

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ABSTRACT

ENHANCING ACCESS AND SUCCESS OF UNDERSERVED STUDENTS IN DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS

By

Theodore O. Mbaegbu

May 2019

Dissertation supervised by Gary Shank

This study examines dual enrollment activities and their impact with a focus on equitable recruitment, persistence, and targeted success mechanisms for Black students and students from low-income families. The lived experiences of four former students from diverse racial and socio-economic backgrounds, and the perspectives of ten dual enrollment practitioners garnered from a purposeful sampling of two Southwestern Pennsylvania universities inform the study. A qualitative approach examines interviews, focus group, and survey data through thematic investigative interpretation to yield common and unique experiences and perspectives relevant to recruitment processes, funding, support systems, and observed outcomes. The findings indicate how adequate preparation, broad-based access, quality opportunity, academic, financial, and psycho-social support hold the keys to equitable recruitment, persistence, and success of both

Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. Other components are a congenial learning environment, familial/community involvement, the efficacy of the programs as well as close co-operation and communication between high schools and post-secondary institutions. The research found how these dynamics, components, features coupled with other soft skills enable underserved students to acquire knowledge, capacity, and competencies that make for college and career readiness and success. The study presents recommendations meant to improve the equitable recruitment and targeted success of underserved student populations in dual enrollment programs.

DEDICATION

To

Dr. & Mrs. Ifeanyi Patrick Ubah

for their support, and services to humanity.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACT: American College Testing Inc.

ADA: Average Daily Attendance.

AP: Advanced Placement.

CAP: Co-operative Alliance Program.

CCT: Cultural Capital Theory.

CP: College Programs.

CRT: Critical Race Theory.

CTE: Career and Technical Education.

DE: Dual Enrollment.

FTE: Full Time Equivalent.

GATE: Gifted and Talented Education.

IB: International Baccalaureate.

LCCC: Lake City Community College.

MOU: Memorandum of Understanding.

NACEP: National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships.

PDSA: Plan-Do-Study-Act.

SCT: Social Cultural Theory.

SES: Social Economic Status.

USDEI: Underserved Student Dual Enrollment Initiative.

VT: Validation Theory.

SCB#1: Student College Based interviewee 1 (Pseudonymously Regina).

ACB#1: Administrator College Based Interviewee 1 (Pseudonymously Destiny).

ACB#2: Administrator College Based Interviewee 2 (Pseudonymously Don).

CCB#1: Councilor College Based Interviewee 1 (Pseudonymously Dynasty).

CCB#2: Councilor College Based Interviewee 2 (Pseudonymously Disney).

CCB#3: Councilor College Based Interviewee 3 (Pseudonymously Desirae).

SCH#1: Student College in High School Interviewee 1 (Pseudonymously Joseph).

SCH#2: Student College in High School Interviewee 2 (Pseudonymously Amanda).

SCH#3: Student College in High School Interviewee 3 (Pseudonymously Lucas).

ACH#1: Administrator College in High School interviewee 1 (Pseudonymously Tom).

ACH#2: Administrator College in High School interviewee 2 (Pseudonymously Jane).

ACH#3: Administrator College in High School interviewee 3 (Pseudonymously Jessy).

CCH#1: Councilor College in High School Interviewee 1 (Pseudonymously Tim).

CCH#2: Councilor College in High School Interviewee 2 (Pseudonymously Philo).

Chapter 1: Introduction

Dual-enrollment programs provide high school students with important college preparation, access, and success strategies. Dual enrollment has become a means of improving the high school experience as well as compressing time to college degree completion, which on the average, is about 5 to 5.5 years for U.S. students (Andrews, 2004). Yet, racial/ ethnic minorities and low-income students remain disproportionately underrepresented in dual enrollment programs (Zinth, 2014), post-secondary education and degree completion when compared to their White and affluent counterparts (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003). Underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs contribute to their lack of college and career readiness. College and career education is a credible tool for eradicating poverty and rectifying the social mobility gap between White and high-income people on one hand and Black and low-income people on the other hand, as well as boosting the international competitiveness of the United States (Bryant, 2015; Hoffman, Vargas, Venezia & Miller, 2007).

Many policymakers and educational leaders deem it a good policy to provide Black students and students from low-income backgrounds with equitable opportunity to participate in dual enrollment programs as a panacea to rectifying the disparity in post-secondary education, college completion (Amos, 2008; Hoffman, 2003; Museus, Lutovsky, & Colbeck, 2007; Pretlow, & Wathington, 2014), and job acquisition. While dual enrollment has the acknowledged potential for increasing tertiary education opportunity, it also has the capacity to worsen the existing inequitable college access

between the White and high-income students on the one hand, and the Black and low-income students on the other hand (Museus, Lutovsky, & Colbeck, 2007). Dual enrollment makes it easy for high school students who participate in the programs to gain access and succeed in college (An, 2013a; Barnett & Stamm, 2010; Foster, 2010; Hugo, 2001; Rodriguez, Hughes, & Belfield, 2012). It is a cost-efficient way to obtain a college degree (Hoffman, 2005) and offers many opportunities for psychological and social maturity (Johnson & Brophy, 2006).

It is a matter of social justice and equity to provide Black students and students from low-income families with equitable opportunity to pursue and excel in college and career education through dual enrollment programs. It will reposition them to acquire the knowledge, skills, and capacities that are necessary for contemporary job positions, make good money and contribute to the growth of the modern democratic society. While the efficacy of dual enrollment programs is prevalent in research, what is less known are the ways and means of achieving such success particularly for Black students and students from low-income families. This study makes an original contribution in this understudied areas by analyzing the experiences of diverse student populations (including Black students, White students, high-poverty, and low-poverty level students) and examining the perceptions of the Administrators and Counselors of the programs to unravel the dynamics that promote equity and success of Black and low-income students in the programs.

1.0 Background to the Study

Underrepresentation of Black students and low-income students in dual enrollment programs is part of the overall achievement gap that exists in education between White and high-income students on the one hand, and Black and low-income students on the other hand (Zinth, 2014). Though this chasm has been there for the past two centuries, it is in the recent decades that educational leaders and policymakers “have begun to reference the achievement gap as one of the most pressing and difficult educational and social challenges of the 21st century” (Howard, 2010, p.12). This is neither to suggest that all White students are performing well nor that all White students always perform better than Black students. To think so will amount to a Black-White dichotomy (Howard, 2010) which is non-existent. I do not intend to limit my articulation of social justice issue to the Whites versus Blacks as that will be tantamount to Black/White binary (Yosso, 2005). Hence, this research will be advocating for both underserved Black students as well as low-income students *in toto*.

Generally speaking, there is a disparity in the achievement gap between White and high-income students on the one hand and their Black and low-income counterpart on the other (Howard, 2010). Euro-American colonial masters developed the concept “White” in the last half of the seventeenth century in order to contrast themselves from those they tagged “Black” (Feagin, 2006). However, in this study, the term “Black” is used to reference “African-Americans” while “White” is used for “Caucasians” because these concepts represent basic inherited identities rather than acquired ones. The disparity in education between Black and low-income students on the one hand, and White and high-

income students on the other has led to the underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs (Hoffman, Vargas, Venezia & Miller, 2007; Welner & Carter, 2013; Zinth, 2014). Though this disparity is an indubitable fact, however, what is contestable are the causes and the remedies (Howard, 2010). The study will proceed to explicate and clarify the key concepts pertinent to this study.

1.1.0 Explication of Key Terms and Concepts

The salient concepts in this study are dual enrollment, high schoolers, college and career readiness and success, equity or fair equality of educational opportunity, dynamics, low-income students, programs' practitioner and records. Others are persistence, institutional agents, racism, systematic racism, cultural imperialism, empowerment, empowerment social capital, and validation.

1.2.0 The Meaning of Dual Enrollment Programs

Dual enrollment programs are a mechanism with sundry nomenclatures. Dual enrollment goes under different appellations such as "dual credit", "dual enrollment options", "concurrent enrollment", and "joint enrollment" (American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 2002; Bailey, Hughes, & Karp, 2002; Kleiner & Lewis, 2005; Museus, Lutovsky, & Colbeck, 2007). Though these terms are not identical, they are commutative. Hence, in this study, these terms may be used interchangeably. In the Pittsburgh area, some of the names in use for the dual credit programs are dual enrollment, College in High School (CHS), College Now (CN) to mention but some. Allen (2010) enlists some other examples of dual enrollment programs such as the City

University of New York College Now, College Quest of Chicago, Early College High School Initiative, and Florida dual enrollment program. Others are Georgia ACCEL program, Hawaii Running Start, Massachusetts Dual Enrollment, National Middle College Consortium, Ohio Seniors to sophomores, Salt Lake Community College Concurrent Enrollment, and Washington State Running Start (Allen, 2010).

Wittgenstein (1994) underscores the importance of the analysis of language and clarification of the meaning of terms and concepts. Often, the definition of dual enrollment has wide variations in a bid to capture its richness. Dual enrollment (DE) is such a dynamic phenomenon that many scholars who set out to define it only succeeded in describing it. Some see dual enrollment as a situation where high school students enroll to obtain college credit, while dual credit or concurrent enrollment refers to a situation where students receive both college and high school credit for the same course (Allen, 2010). Others describe dual enrollment as "collaborative efforts between high schools and colleges, in which high school students (juniors and seniors) are permitted to take college courses" (Karp & Hughes, 2008a, p.14). "Dual enrollment programs are collaborative efforts between high schools and colleges in which high school students are permitted to enroll in college transcript" (Allen, 2010, p.1). Boswell, (2001) describes it as programs to which high school districts partner with colleges to offer to high schoolers the opportunity to earn college credit.

Hugo (2001) in corroboration views dual enrollment as "one of the strategies for building closer links between high schools and colleges" (p.72). Hugo's description of dual enrollment lacks precision as any other college preparatory program could easily fit

into the description including Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) degrees, and so on. Speroni (2011) views it as one of the "programs that allow high school students to take college-level courses and earn college credits" (p.1). Speroni's description like that of Hugo's is not precise. Krueger (2006) defines dual enrollment more precisely as "an academic program where college-level courses are offered to high school students for college credits" (p.1). First, Krueger (2006) left unsaid which institution (the high school or college) hosts the program, and second, the use of college-level courses instead of college courses seems problematic. College level courses will apply more appropriately to Advance Program rather than to Dual Enrollment. Dual enrollment deals with not just college level courses but rather college courses with college syllabi (Karp & Hughes, 2008a).

Many scholars, researchers, and practitioners have viewed dual enrollment from diverse perspectives. Hoffman (2005) acclaims dual enrollment as an arrangement that offers junior and senior secondary school students the opportunity to gain college credits. Hoffman (2005) presents dual enrollment with a social justice twist when she described it as "next best thing" for states aspiring to promote the number of underrepresented student populations in post-secondary education (p.1). Although Dual Enrollment has been used to refer to various types of practices which are slightly and sometimes quite different from one another, in this study, dual enrollment programs are those in which high school students participate in college courses to obtain college credits through a post-secondary education that apply to their high school credit as well.

1.2.1 Dual Enrollment Program Instructors

Teaching a dual enrollment course requires some basic qualifications. Regular college academic staff or high school teachers with collegiate adjunct status may instruct in dual credit programs (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). In a situation where a high school teacher is teaching the college course, it may be necessary to have a college faculty member as an overseer who works in close collaboration with the high school teacher (Cassidy, Keating, & Young, 2010). It will also ensure that the teaching quality conforms to the rigor that is befitting of a college course. Cassidy, Keating, and Young (2010) share the following ideas about cross-institutional faculty collaboration. The college faculty will be quite helpful in working out logistics such as the textbook, timeline, as well as how to navigate college policies and procedures, standards, and expectations. When there is increased dialogue and collaboration between instructors from the secondary and post-secondary contexts, it may yield higher quality college and more rigorous courses for dual enrollment students (Cassidy, Keating, & Young, 2010). Program partnerships often facilitate this arrangement through team teaching by a high school teacher and college faculty (Cassidy, Keating, & Young, 2010). One example is in a one-year math course, in the first semester, the college faculty taught the class while the high school teacher provided support in class. And by the second semester, they interchanged roles (Cassidy, Keating, & Young, 2010).

Modalities of Dual Enrollment Programs

The delivery of dual enrollment programs may be through face to face or online or in a hybrid format. It could be College in high school-based classes, or College campus-

based classes (Allen, 2010; Boswell, 2001), or anywhere through the power of online delivery (Boswell, 2001). Although there is no national data with regard to on-line dual enrollment offering, data emerging from the use of online classes both at school districts as well as colleges suggest that the use of an online mode of delivery of dual program might be on the increase (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). In 2007-2008 the school districts who participated in Babson Survey had at least one of their students taking an online course while about 47% of the districts made use of postsecondary institutions for online courses (Babson Survey Research Group in Barnett & Stamm, 2010).

The choice of high school as a venue of dual enrollment programs has the potential of lowering costs in the following areas namely program administration, the transportation of students, and cost of instruction (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Throughout the US 74% of college courses taken by high school students through dual credit programs are taught in the high school (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). College High programs portray an agreement between high schools and colleges to offer college courses at the high school, for college credit which is applicable to both diploma and college (Boswell, 2001).

On the other hand, college-based classes though they may be costly have many merits. Dual enrollment programs offer college courses to a cohort of high school students on a college campus (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). “Offering Dual Enrollment classes to a cohort of high school students can help them acclimate to college expectations, as well as concentrate participation among faculty interested in teaching Dual Enrollment students” (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010, p.8). It allows a student to

experience first-hand “college environment and develop an identity as a college student” (Barnett & Stamm, 2010, p.3). Also, it affords the student the opportunity to interact with other regular college students and guarantees that dual enrollment students are dealing with a college-level work in its entire rigor (Barnett & Stamm, 2010).

In addition, we have early and middle college high schools with an embodiment of dual enrollment courses. This partnership between school districts and colleges is usually located on the college campus. Early colleges are designed so that students could graduate from high school with an associate degree (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). The underrepresented students in college are often the targets of an early college education, as it provides a support system which enables them to be successful in their academic endeavor (Barnett & Stamm, 2010).

Configurations of Dual Enrollment Programs

Dual enrollment has several forms of configuration with regard to how it is offered based on the purpose and the availability of funding (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). It could be offered in the form of a singleton (individual), or comprehensive (in sequences) or in an enhanced comprehensive format (Bailey & Karp, 2003). The most common arrangement is to absorb the dual enrollment students into normal college classes with college courses taught by a college professor (Barnett & Stamm 2010; Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010; Karp & Hughes, 2008a). When dual enrollment courses are offered individually in no sequential order, it is a singleton or cafeteria-style (Bailey & Karp, 2003; Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Running Start in the State of Washington and Postsecondary Education Options of Michigan are some of the programs that espouse

singleton dual enrollment classes (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). In Washington and Michigan states, their policies allow the students to take the courses free of charge while the state reimburses the colleges that offer those courses (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). With little or no support given to dual enrollment students beyond that which is available to the regular students, it is less likely to be the best option for the low achieving students (Barnett & Stamm, 2010).

Alternatively, the rolling out of courses in a progressive sequential manner in which students begin with pre-collegiate courses and from there they move on to a more advanced course is called a comprehensive format. New York City College Now program is one of the examples of a college that offers college developmental education in Math and English in pre-college sequence (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Usually, there is no college credit for these developmental courses; the courses are to prepare them to take college credit courses in Math and English (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Project Lead the Way (PLTW) and Tech Prep and career pathways programs make use of a sequence of courses that include dual enrollment options (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Since sequential dual enrollment options are likely to be part of a more comprehensive support system, it is more appropriate for academically challenged students (Barnett & Stamm, 2010).

It is possible to offer a course in an emerging enhanced comprehensive format with models designed to take care of traditionally underserved student populations (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). “These include dropout recovery programs such as Gateway to College in which students can earn a high school and college credential simultaneously” (Barnett and Stamm, 2010, p.3). Enhanced comprehensive support format is mostly in programs in

which students are encouraged to take multiple courses that are accompanied by adequate academic, personal, and social support system (Barnett & Stamm, 2010).

1.2.1 Dual Enrollment (DE) and other Credit-based Transition Programs (CBTPs)

The enhanced and accelerated programs include but are not limited to these programs namely advanced placement (AP) courses and examinations, the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma program, dual enrollment, and career and technical education programs (e.g., career pathways, tech prep) (Barnett & Stamm, 2010, p.5).

(a) Dual Enrollment (DE), and Advanced Placement (AP)

Dual enrollment (DE) programs are relatively new phenomena when compared to College Board Advancement Placement (AP) programs, which started as early as 1950 (Allen, 2010; Boswell, 2001). Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement have some similarities and dissimilarities. The goal of both programs is to accelerate the academic development of the students and ultimately to earn college credit. Dual Enrollment is quite distinctive from Advanced Placement in some ways. First, college faculty or adjunct faculty who also teach at a high school develop Dual Enrollment syllabi in accordance with the college standard, while high school teachers develop Advanced Placement course syllabi in accordance with detailed guidelines of College Board (Howley, Howley, Howley, & Duncan, 2013). Second, students earn college credit in dual enrollment for successfully completing the courses in early college and dual enrollment programs, while colleges have to award college credits for students who have received a sufficiently high score in advanced placement examinations (Allen, 2010;

Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010; Howley et.al.2013). Again, while Advanced Placement targets advanced students, Dual Enrollment is becoming open to all spectrum of students (Allen, 2010; Hoffman, 2005). Administrators from well-to-do school districts often argue that Advanced Placement is the most credible form of showing that students have attained a college level work (Allen, 2010). However, Weiss (2005) opines that most of the educational practitioners in moderate and low-income school districts see Dual Enrollment as a veritable opportunity for college-level education.

Speroni (2011) uses data from two cohorts of all public school students in Florida while employing the dual enrollment academic courses that count towards college degree alone and advanced placement courses, but not optional advanced placement exams to ensure a fair comparison. Speroni (2011) employs quantitative and qualitative measures to study the extent to which advanced placement and dual enrollment programs' participation affect students' access and success in college education as well as whether the relative apparent effects are due to students minority status and academic ability. The finding indicates that both advanced placement and dual enrollment programs have positive outcomes with regard to postsecondary access and success. However, college enrollment outcomes are not the same in both programs. While dual enrollment students, when compared to advanced placement students, are more likely to go to college after high school at the rate of 12 to 6, they are less likely to first enroll in a four-year college at the rate of 7 to 18 respectively.

Though dual enrollment students are more likely to pursue postsecondary education than advanced placement students, the fact that advanced placement students are more

likely to enter 4-year degree institutions more than dual enrollment students give them a greater advantage in terms of degree completion. Advanced placement students, when compared to dual enrollment students, are more likely to obtain a bachelor's degree with no statistically significant difference between minorities and non-minorities. Speroni (2011) indicates that while courses taken at community college have effects, the ones taken at the high school have no notable effect. The study has some "implications for college admission practices that are unduly influenced by advanced placement participation" (Speroni, 2011, p.33), as it indicates the rate at which both programs participants attend postsecondary education and the rate of their degree attainment. The study expresses some concern about the quality of instruction and curriculum of dual enrollment programs offered at high schools (Speroni, 2011).

(b) Tech Prep and Dual Enrollment

Tech prep programs usually start in the last two years of high school and project into the first two years of college with the agreement of the high school district and community college for technical and professional education (Bailey, Hughes, & Karp, 2002). Tech Prep was conceived in the early 1980s by Dale Parnell to offer high school students a clear pathway to advanced technical education at the colleges (Bailey, Hughes, & Karp, 2002). Within the local context, this is usually an arrangement among businesses, high schools and tertiary institutions (Bailey, Hughes, & Karp, 2002). In contrast to dual enrollment, which has diverse academic-oriented goals, college prep seems more of a vocational/ technical pathway (Bailey, Hughes, & Karp, 2002). A key defect of Tech Prep is that students usually do not enjoy its 'credit-in-escrow' or

‘articulated coursework’ model that needs admission to affiliate college before the award of credit or advanced standing are made (Karp and Hughes, 2008a). Students who successfully complete their coursework in dual enrollment programs usually receive college credit irrespective of whether those students choose to attend a particular college or not (Karp & Hughes, 2008a).

International Baccalaureate (IB) and Dual Enrollment (DE) Programs

International Baccalaureate is a two-year course of study for junior and senior high schoolers under the auspices of the International Baccalaureate Organization that supervises the implementation of the program (Allen, 2010). The program has six core academic subject areas: English, second languages, experimental sciences, arts, mathematics, and computer science, and individuals and societies (Allen, 2010). Students who successfully complete the course of their study and earn International Baccalaureate diploma may have college credit made available to them too (Allen, 2010).

While both International Baccalaureate and Dual Enrollment possess the capacity to provide high schoolers the opportunity to earn college credit, they differ in some ways. Dual enrollment students make use of college syllabi for their coursework and earn college credit upon successful completion of their coursework; International Baccalaureate students make use of a standardized curriculum developed by the international organization and are not guaranteed college credit upon completion of their coursework (Allen, 2010; Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Colleges and universities award the credits of International Baccalaureate students at their discretion upon application based on each student end-of-course exam score (Allen, 2010; Cassidy,

Keating & Young, 2010). Having delineated the differences and similarities between dual enrollment and some other credit-based transition programs, it is worthwhile to describe the high schoolers.

1.2.2 Operational Definitions

Description of the High Schoolers

Students in grade levels 9-12 are high schoolers known as freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors respectively. This is an adolescent stage of life. Adolescence is a temporary stage of development in humans that permits biological (pubertal), psychological, and social changes in view of adulthood (Stanton-Salazar, 2011). The major impetus at this stage is not to graduate from college but the quest for intimacy and career ambition (Armstrong, 2006). This stage of human development is characterized by complex social relationships with individuals, family members, groups, organization and institutions that contribute to the socialization of individuals (Stanton-Salazar, 2011). "Many positive developmental changes are taking place during middle adolescence (ages 15 to 17), including the ability to develop coherent plans and long-term goals, the capacity to analyze problems with greater facility, and the capacity to ask deeper questions about moral, ethical, and religious issues" (Armstrong, 2006, p.139).

By viewing high school experiences as preparation for real life, students who feel bored with academic subjects can chart a different pathway to success in adulthood (Armstrong, 2006). Thus, high schools should prepare students to live independently in the real world. This preparation for independent living includes going to college, as well

as taking up other vocational and technical careers (Armstrong, 2006). Such preparation should not be limited to those granting four-year degrees but also include career and technical centers such as the ones that prepare beauticians, plumbers, paralegals, secretaries, child care workers, contractors, and so on (Armstrong, 2006).

Developmentally inappropriate educational practices that often occur at this mid-and late-adolescent stage of life include crowded classrooms, tracking, undue academic pressure, sedentary classroom learning, impersonal student-teacher relationships, and zero-tolerance policies (Armstrong 2006). Instead, Armstrong (2006) advocates small-size classrooms, internships, career and charter schools, service and cooperative learning, mentoring, modeling, and democratic communities as appropriate developmental practices for student success during this stage of early adulthood.

Besides academics, students should be exposed to internship, apprenticeship, and other programs that will help them to succeed in life should they fail to make it to college (Armstrong, 2006). However, various kinds of research have shown that some forms of post-secondary education are pertinent in order to meet up with the evolving contemporary job positions (Hoffman, 2005; Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). By the year 2020, two-thirds of would be jobs in the US will require some measure of post-secondary education (Carnevale, Smith, and Strohl, 2013). It has been projected that 30 percent of those jobs will require at least a Bachelor's degree and 36 percent of them some form of degree credentials or at least an associate degree (Carnevale, Smith, and Strohl, 2013). Consequently, whether one is college-bound or career-bound, dual enrollment can help prepare students for postsecondary educational opportunities.

College and Career Readiness and Success

College and career readiness is the ensemble of core academic knowledge, skills and capacity a student needs in higher education to be successful while being free from remediation (Lombardi, Seburn & Conley, 2011). The four essential components of college and career readiness are content knowledge, cognitive strategies, academic behavior, and contextual skills (Conley, 2010). College and career readiness are dependent on rigor and the nature of one's coursework, understanding of college culture, good study habits, and capacity to access support (Lombardi, Seburn & Conley, 2011). Many high school students often complete their high school diploma without being college and career ready (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Thus, college readiness is the *raison d'etre* of government initiative and institution of early college high school and it often drives program policy and implementation (Leonard, 2013).

Fair Equality of Educational Opportunity

The study pursues the issue of underrepresentation of Black students, and low-income students in dual enrollment as that of inequitable access and opportunity rather than that of inadequacy. When the problem of the achievement gap is viewed as a matter of oppression and liberation rather than incompetence and underachievement it basically changes both the problem space and its attendant solution (Mintrop, 2016). The sphere of higher education in its scholarship and policy has not demonstrated sufficient accountability in the use of language, and tools necessary to address the issue of racial equity in education (Dowd & Bensimon, 2015). Hillard (2003) as cited by Tillman (2008) in her review of his scholarship notes “more than an achievement gap”- the absence of

the opportunity to learn as a result of the unequal distribution of educational resources.” (p.592). Achievement gap and its concomitant unequal instructional output are redefined in terms of "opportunity gap" (Gorski, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2006). Ladson-Billings (2006) took the issue to its logical conclusion by turning the "opportunity gap" into "educational debt.” Hence, the underrepresentation of Black students and low-income students in dual enrollment continues to exacerbate this debt in educational opportunity and outcome in such a manner that deserves serious attention.

The fair equality of educational opportunity has been viewed from triple interpretations: formal, compensatory and participatory (Howe, 1997). Formal desegregation effort aims at bringing students from diverse racial, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds together but does nothing about renegotiating the norms, practices, and curricula of schools (Howe, 1997). It is exemplified in such measures as busing and magnet school (Howe, 1997). Compensatory integration goes beyond formal diversity to redress the past wrongs and disadvantages suffered by ethnic minorities as exemplified in such programs as bilingual education, special education, free lunch, Title 1 and such likes (Howe, 1997). However, like formal integration, it leaves intact the extant norms, practices, and curricula of schools (Howe, 1997). Further on, the participatory paradigm is one that exercises the virtues of recognition, respect, and non-oppression to the ethnic minorities and involves the disadvantaged groups in the renegotiation of the norms, practices, and curricula of schools (Howe, 1997).

Howe (1997) seems to discount formal integration in so far as it does not go far enough, and compensatory integration because it has a price tag of the opportunity cost of

the dearth of personal and cultural identity for the ethnic minorities. Hence, Howe (1997) writes: "...paying special attention to the limitations of the 'distributive paradigm' of justice and how these might be overcome with a participatory (transformational) view that resolves the apparent conflict between the 'political' and 'educational' aims of schooling" (p.77) is the goal. While subscribing to the participatory ideal of equality of educational opportunity as an ultimate goal, compensatory ideal remains relevant. This is because though it is better to teach children how to fish rather than offer them fish. If children are starving here and now, it is a good idea to give them fish, while still teaching them how to fish. The "fair equality" or preferably "equity" of educational opportunity for the underserved student populations-Black students and students from low-income families should not just be formal (inclusion) alone but also compensatory and participatory in interpretation and application.

Dynamics: By dynamics, one understands the features, components, and characteristics that make for equitable recruitment of underserved students such as the preparatory programs, environment, mentorship, advisories, family involvement, and support system to mention but a few.

Low-income students: Low-income students are defined as students who are enrolled in free or reduced lunch where an applicable record exists or whose families benefit from any government assistance programs.

Successful students: Successful students are those students who have gone to college without needing remediation, or students who maintained a cumulative GPA of 3.00 and above in their college courses in dual enrollment programs.

Program practitioners: Program practitioners consist of administrators, faculty and student affairs professionals who are involved in dual enrollment programs.

Program records: I understand archival documents, manuals, administrative dataset, and internet related documents of the programs.

Persistence: It is the ability and willingness to return for subsequent semester till completion.

An institutional agent: One understands “...an individual who occupies one or more hierarchical position of relative high-status, either within a society or in an institution (or an organization)” (Stanton-Salazar, 2011, p.1075).

Racism: “Critical scholars define racism as a systemic relationship of unequal power between White people and people of color” (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012, p.119).

Systematic racism: “The word ‘systemic’ is an adjective of the noun “system” derived from two Greek words “syn” meaning “together” and "histanai" meaning “cause to stand” to form "synistania" which is the stem of "systema" meaning “ to place together, organize, form in order...set of correlated principles, facts, ideas, etc.” (Harper, 2017, para.1). In other words, a system is a set of parts that form a whole (Harper, 2017). Systematic racism is about a group position of power and privilege in a hierarchical social structure and their capacity to influence other out-group from that position (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012).

Cultural imperialism: Cultural imperialism is an oppression that is in line with the imposition of the cultural values of the dominant group on other targeted groups (Howe, 1997, p.70).

Empowerment: One understands, “the active participatory process of gaining resources, competencies, and key forms of power necessary for gaining control over one’s life and accomplishing important life goals” (Maton & Salem, 1995 in Stanton-Salazar, 2011, p.1090).

Empowerment social capital: By empowerment social capital, one understands those resources and varieties of institutional support which are entrenched in connections or relationships with capable, highly placed institutional agents oriented to go counter to the system (Stanton-Salazar 2011).

Validation: It “...is an enabling, confirming and the supportive process initiated by in- and out-of-class agents that fosters academic and interpersonal development” (Rendon, 1994, p.44).

1.2.3 Statement of the Problem

The underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs because of inadequate preparation and poor funding contributes to their lack of college and career readiness and success (Bryant, 2015; Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010; Zinth, 2016). Hence, inadequate preparation of Black and low-income students and poor funding of dual enrollment programs remain my strategic problems of practice. Meanwhile, dual enrollment has no equal access to all eligible students across schools in

every state. In Pennsylvania, for example, dual enrollment-though permitted-is not mandated as a prescription (Hoffman, 2005). Therefore, some schools in mainly urban school districts do not avail their students the opportunity to participate in dual enrollment programs (Zinth, 2014). Even where they do, rigid student eligibility requirements become an impediment to racial/ethnic minority and low-income students who are most in need of the programs, due to inadequate preparation by educators (Taylor, Borden, & Park, 2015)

Besides availability, affordability is another major obstacle to Black and low-income students' participation in dual enrollment programs. The stark reality is that funding college credits by high school students are difficult for low-income students, racial/ethnic minorities and their families (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Apart from the numerous bills and expenses they face, they also have to eke out the tuition fees, which can be expensive depending on the number of credits a student is taking each term or academic year. They also have to find money for university fees, books, transportation, laboratory fees, and so on (Cassidy, Keating, & Young, 2010).

In many instances, White and affluent families can afford to pay out-of-pocket costs for dual enrollment thereby availing their children the opportunity to accumulate a good number of college credits while in high school. Conversely, many Black and low-income families cannot do the same. This situation is known to widen the already existing opportunity gap and disparity in the education system in the U.S. between White and affluent students on one hand and Black and low-income students on the other hand. With continuous underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual

enrollment programs that provide an easy on-ramp to and success in college, the neediest students will not be able to share in the benefits that accrue from dual enrollment.

1.2.4 The Importance and Significance of the Study

Education is a determinant factor in one's life. The level of one's education will determine the person's income, social class, and even health status (Cordes & Miller, 2005). Until the problem of the inequity in education between White and high-income students on one hand, and Black and low-income students on the other is addressed, universal educational success will remain a mirage. One without quality education is at a disadvantage when compared to someone who has received a robust education (Cordes & Miller, 2005). All children irrespective of their socio-economic status or race, deserve quality education (Cordes & Miller, 2005). The only way to ensure this equal education is through equity, inclusion and social justice in the U.S educational system. The issue is pertinent because, without equitable opportunities for Black students and students from low-income families to participate in dual enrollment, they will continue to lag behind in their college and career readiness in comparison to their White and high-income counterparts. While students from low poverty backgrounds participate at very high rates in dual enrollment programs, students from high poverty backgrounds participate at a much lower rate (Museus, Lutovsky & Colbeck, 2007).

Repeatedly, data indicate serious disparities between Low Poverty and High Poverty students when it comes to college and career readiness as determined by ACT data (ACT, 2016; Roorda & Lomax, 2015). Furthermore, American College Test (ACT) scores, which are strong indicators of college and career readiness of students, report substantial

racial disparities in educational preparation between Black students and low-income students on one hand, and White students and high-income students on the other hand (ACT, 2016). In 2014, though more students from low-income families took ACT college readiness exams than previously, the numbers meeting three or more ACT College Readiness Benchmarks remain the same as for the past five years (Erickson & Sidhu, 2015).

Roorda and Lomax (2015) report the percentage of 2015 high school graduates meeting ACT college readiness benchmarks as follows:

Table 1

Subject Area Proficiency of All Students White Students Black Students

English	64%	75%	34%
Math	42%	52%	14%
Reading	46%	56%	19%
Science	38%	48%	12%

Table 1 ACT Readiness Benchmarks 2015

In English, 64 percent of all students were college and career ready; 75 percent of White students were college and career ready, while only 34 percent of Black students were. In Mathematics, 42 percent of all students were college and career ready; the ACT deemed 52 percent of White students ready, while only 14 percent of Black students were ready. In Reading, 46 percent of all students met the subject readiness; 56 percent of White students were college and career ready, while only 19 percent of Black students were ready. Overall 38 percent of test takers in science were college and career ready, 48

percent of White students were college and career ready and only 12 percent of Black students were ready. Repeatedly, the data indicate the great disparity between White and Black students when it comes to college and career readiness as defined by the ACT Exam (Roorda & Lomax, 2015). It is troubling that 50% of ACT-tested low-income students did not meet a single Benchmark (Erickson & Sidhu 2015). The ACT is a good measure of determining students' college and career readiness and success. Hence, the continual underrepresentation of Black students and low-income students in dual enrollment programs deserves serious attention.

1.2.5 The Scope of the Study

This study concerns both access and success of Black students and students from the low-income background in dual enrollment programs. Several challenges beset dual enrollment programs and equitable participation of Black and low-income students in particular. An insufficient articulation of mission to serve a wide range of students, communication gaps and existing barriers between secondary and postsecondary institutions, awarding of concurrent credit and its general acceptability, accessibility, and funding of dual enrollment programs, are just a representative sample of some of the problems that beset dual enrollment programs (Howley et al., 2013).

However, this study will focus on the underrepresentation of Black and low-income students because of inadequate preparation by educators and poor funding of the programs (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010; Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Hence, the issues of availability and affordability of dual enrollment programs to Black students and low-income students become the focus of the study. The study will focus on the

experiences of diverse student populations- Black students and other students of lower income status who have been successful and the perspective of the practitioners to unravel the features, components, and characteristics that make for equitable recruitment, persistence, and success of Black students and students from low-income families in dual enrollment programs.

The study will be based on a descriptive study of two dual enrollment programs to ascertain their recruitment processes, funding, support systems, and observed outcomes based on the perspective and experiences of Black students, and other lower-income students, and practitioners with the hope of enhancing growth, improvement, and equity in dual enrollment programs as a matter of social justice. The study will engage with some former students to see what they think and feel were quite helpful, how they were successful and the factors that contributed to their success. Aware that every success may have a different story behind it, the study intends to learn the obstacles, if any, they may have overcome in order to be successful. And what it has to teach us in order to become more effective stewards of social justice, inclusion, diversity, equity, democracy, and schooling.

The study will bring home to scholarly practitioners their own contributions toward the making of a just and more vibrant society. Also, it will examine educators' role in social justice engineering, as stewards of social justice, what is being done, where it has worked we want to nurture it and where it has not worked to correct and improve on it. Part of the beauty of this work is that this inquiry combines two dual enrollment programs in Southwestern Pennsylvanian universities in the Pittsburgh region with

different modus operandi “college-based” and “high school based”, spotting the areas of comparative advantage of each of the programs and what programs can do to supplement areas of its opportunity cost.

1.2.6 The Social Justice Implications

Dual enrollment as presently constituted is not equitable and fair in sharing of benefits and burden. Apparently, the social inheritance mechanism appears to be fair, in reality, the intergenerational inheritance of the White power, privilege, and resources at the exclusion of the Blacks for so many centuries of oppression make it unfair (Feagin, 2006). While the White students have considerable participation in the programs (Zinth, 2014) and enjoy the benefits of easy access to and success in college (Foster, 2010; Hugo, 2001), the Black students are grossly underrepresented and denied the benefits (Carter, 2006; Zinth, 2014; Pretlow & Wathington, 2014). In other words, justice as equity and fairness was not served in the programs and "the tenor of the discourse shifted from academic excellence to academic equity" (Howley, et al. 2013 p.80).

The validity of the justice test stems from its emphasis on the fundamental equality of every person irrespective of race, color, and socio-economic status. If everybody has inherent dignity and value as a human person, then everybody has an equal claim to a share (Hamilton, 2009). Hence, there is a need for equitable participation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. The White and high-income students get most of the benefits of dual enrollment programs since dual enrollment programs increasingly are efficacious ways of gaining easy access to and success in college (Foster, 2010; Hugo, 2001). The White and high-income school-age children in most cases do

not share the burdens (Desilver, 2013). Black and low-income youth mostly disenchant with the school system, drop out of school and suffer unemployment (Desilver, 2013; Gonzalez, 2005) due to lack of equitable opportunity to participate in dual enrollment programs. When Black youth are employed, they are either under-employed or engage in low paying jobs due to lack of college education credentials (Hoffman, 2005).

Often, there is no single agreed-upon paradigm for fair distribution, resulting in some contention among ethical persons (Hamilton, 2009). There is no doubt that when a person belongs to the dominant, hegemonic group there is a tendency to minimize issues of inequity, marginalization, and underrepresentation by rationalization based on "deficient view" perspective (Dowd & Bensimon, 2015). "The case of black Americans is also prototypical because the standard examples for such racial categories as 'inferior race' or 'non-whites'...indeed since at least the eighteenth century have involved black Americans" (Feagin, 2006, p.13-14). It has happened before in the case of slavery, and segregation in the U.S, apartheid in South Africa and tribalism in Nigeria. Several reasons stand to be blamed for this failure. Acknowledgment of inequity is a source of discomfiture, stirs up political conflict and mental dissonance for those who have tolerated it for so long a time and believe in business as usual (Mintrop, 2016).

The underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs and its dire consequences is such a serious issue that it should not be entrusted to vote. In most elections, the majority carries the day and more often than not, it is a winner takes all situation. A majority is not always right. Might is not right, but the just is right. Dual enrollment programs demand equity. The action for equity is most likely to

produce a fair distribution because its basis will not be imperialism, hegemony, democracy, aristocracy, but justice as fairness, care, and transformation. Fairness and equity are defining principles of justice.

This thesis is founded on the standards of justice as fairness, justice as care and justice as transformation. Unlike Plato whose theory of justice is aristocratic, Rawls' own is a representative of liberal egalitarianism (Howe, 1997). According to Rawls (1971) for an institution or program to claim to be just in its policies, procedures, and practices, these principles developed from the original position of veiled ignorance of one's state, race, gender, status, position, and privilege should hold true. One, each person is to have equal rights as others in most basic extensive liberty and two, social and economic inequalities are to be arranged to the advantage of everyone and attached to offices and positions which are open to all (Rawls, 1971).

Rawls (1971) principles of fairness took care of horizontal equity (equal need deserves equal resources) and vertical equity (persons with greater needs deserve greater resources). However, justice in the educational system is not limited to the fair distribution of financial, and material resources but includes other primary social goods that are associated with human rights and dignity (Rawls, 1971). Noddings (1999) contends that in the scheme of things, Rawls' principles have not shed enough light on how to tackle the issues that affect the rights of human person such as respect, liberty, and dignity of the human person within the learning community. Noddings (1999) espouses the ethics of care to address the issues of respect, sense of belonging, and dignity of the human person with regard to ethnic minority groups. Care ethicists are

concerned not just about individual and group differences but also the relationship between the caregiver and care-taker (Noddings, 1999).

Furthermore, justice as transformation has led Critical Race Theorists (CRT) to extend the issues of oppression, discrimination, and alienation evident in social structure to educational settings in the explanation of educational inequity (Dowd & Bensimon, 2015). “Critical race scholars view persistent racial inequities in educational participation and outcomes as evidence of institutional and structural racism” (Dowd & Bensimon, 2015, p.15). Practitioners of dual enrollment and other stakeholders in the education enterprise are more likely to make the sacrifices necessary to ensure equity in dual enrollment if they are well informed. “Justice is one of the basic instincts in man, and subjects are prone to give up some of their wants if others are not getting a fair reward” (Hamilton, 2009, n.p).

1.2.7 The Purpose and Goal of the Study

The purpose of the research is to identify the factors, components, conditions, strategies, policies, and practices that promote equitable access, persistence, and success of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. This study has as its overarching goal to achieve equitable participation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs and to enhance their college and career readiness. In Florida, for example, with equitable access to dual enrollment, Black students who participated in dual enrollment programs enrolled in colleges and postsecondary education programs at the rate of 75%, as opposed to 45% enrollment rates when compared to their non-dual enrollment Black counterparts (Krueger, 2006). The study aims at improving college and

career readiness and success of Black and low-income students through their equitable participation in dual enrollment programs. It has been deemed good policy to provide Black students and low-income high school students with equitable opportunities to pursue and excel toward their college education through dual enrollment programs (Museus, Lutovsky, & Colbeck, 2007). This will reposition them to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are necessary for college and career readiness, to develop contemporary jobs skills in order to make good money, to become lifelong learners, and to contribute to the growth of modern democratic society.

The research intends to provide findings that will validate the programs' achievements, influence major decision-making, increase efficacy, and lead to an improvement in the policies and practices of the programs with regard to equitable recruitment, persistence, and success of Black and low-income students. The study intends to offer some recommendations as well as action plans aimed at helping school administrators, teachers, student service personnel, and policymakers toward intentional targeting of underserved Black and low-income student populations in preparation, recruitment, and support in the programs. This will serve as a wake-up call for professional educators including administrators, instructors, and student service personnel to make a greater effort towards equity by deliberately targeting underrepresented student populations in preparation, recruitment, and support (Purnell, 2014). It will also bring about greater information and formation to educators regarding the adequate preparation of Black and low-income students for college and career education. It will offer ways aimed at making dual enrollment programs accessible and affordable to racial/ ethnic minorities and low-income students. It will also help communities, families, and students

in their quest to decipher which dual enrollment programs are more amenable to equity, inclusion and social justice.

1.2.8 The Need to Solve the Problem

The distribution as it stands is not fair at all. Inequitable opportunity and underrepresentation of Black students and low-income students in education lead to serious social and economic consequences. Situations may warrant circumstances in which everyone does not have equal claim to the same goods and services (Hamilton, 2009). Certainly, circumstance and need of Black and low-income students as individuals or a particular group or race could be the basis for motivation, support, and "scaffolding" in order to create equitable participation (Schulman, 2014). Hence, Piaget's stages of appropriate practices, as well as Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, remain relevant in scaffolding all students to become successful. Low-income students do well academically remain engaged with a few behavioral problems when they are faced with the same sort of student-centered, higher order learning their high-income counterparts have come to expect from their schools (Gorski, 2013).

1.2.9 Actions in the Specific Context of the Problem

In the past 15 years, the American system of education has been gradually drifting to the goal of a seamless system of education called K-16 or K-20 in order to accommodate the need of the underserved and under-resourced students and minority students (Hoffman, 2005). However, the starting point is through critical information dissemination and creating awareness of the programs and its excellent benefits. In order

to support student access, many state policies demand dual enrollment programs be given adequate publicity or incorporated into student planning documents (Taylor, Borden, & Park, 2015). In Minnesota, for example, school districts are obliged to provide information to students and their parents about dual credit by March 1, and the law supports providing counseling for students who show interest in the programs (Office of the Legislative Auditor State of Minnesota, 1996).

More so, some states are working toward better funding arrangements. In Minnesota, the state provides transportation refund to students with financial constraints (Minnesota Post-secondary Enrollment Options Program, 2004). Also, the state of Minnesota pays for students taking post-secondary credit programs (Office of the Legislative Auditor State of Minnesota, 1996). In a similar manner, according to Florida law, students are exempt from tuition and fees; the community college recovers full-time equivalent (FTE), but it loses tuition fees (Hoffman, 2005). In the state of Florida, students can take up to 11 credits per semester and can graduate with as much as 44 credits that is almost one and a half year of college (Hoffman, 2005). School districts usually take care of textbooks at the cost of \$125 per course (Hoffman, 2005). In Florida, for instance, the state policy requires that college renegotiate its agreement with the school district each year including advising and data on participation be shared with the state (Hoffman, 2005).

1.3.0 Area of Expertise that informs making Significant Contribution

For over 20 years of service as a teacher of the faith, and an educator, I have seen the need to prepare students adequately and to give them every opportunity and support they

need to attend college and career education with success. These characteristics and identity have influenced the quality of my life while offering me many opportunities to advocate for equitable participation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. They include my family, faith, race, culture, gender, religious affiliation, and educational backgrounds.

First, the migration of my parents from the village to a city where I was born and bred offered me some opportunities, which were not readily available in the village. Second, my father's education and love for learning helped in exposing me to Western education very early in life. I had an opportunity of starting my primary school at a very early age and have progressed from there to secondary education into the tertiary institutions. I have a passion for a college education which has led me to interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary scholarships with advanced degrees in Education, Philosophy, and Theology. These disciplines have prepared my mind to champion the course of social justice for the marginalized populations. Further, I am at home with African thought, culture, and social values such as the unitary vision of reality in contrast to duality (between the visible and invisible), sense of the sacred, respect for life, deep sense of religion, communalism, respect for elders/ legitimately constituted authority, and hospitality.

Second, as a Black male student, I have come to realize that the color of one's skin matters in the US. It goes a long way in defining one's power, privileges, and resources. Social justice literacy has repositioned me to fight for equity and fairness for all

marginalized students irrespective of color, race, ethnicity, and gender. These qualities have been tremendous assets to me in championing the cause of social justice and equity.

Third, my Catholic identity has a marvelous impact on the fulfillment of my endeavors. I was introduced very early into the life of Christian faith from where I rose to a leading position. My position as a teacher of faith has afforded me so many opportunities to learn and live Catholic social principles. They include but are not limited to fundamental option for the poor, the marginalized, and the vulnerable; the principles of subsidiarity, respect for private property as well as the universal designation of the common good. These tools and principles have been quite helpful in my engagement with stakeholders across the boundaries of school, academy, and community as I advocate for equitable participation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs for their college and career readiness.

The affordances and challenges that flow from multiple social identities together with their attendant intersectionality have become clearer to me. It is often difficult to see one's complacency in the perpetuation of injustice with regard to other social groups when one happens to belong to a privileged or an advantaged group in any social category (Tatum, 2013). However, with education and sensitization, people will begin to realize how they are involved advertently or inadvertently in the perpetuation of injustice against other people in the form of racism, sexism, ableism, elitism, structural injustice, political bigotry, and religious fanaticism. The structural injustice may not be necessarily personal but social especially when one's social group is involved. As a result, one has the singular privilege as an educational leader and scholarly practitioner to fight for social

justice, equity and fairness on behalf of the targeted, marginalized, disadvantaged, and underserved student populations.

As a former secondary school teacher and as a school manager for many years, I witnessed first-hand the role power, privilege, wealth, class, nepotism, tribalism, ethnicity, sectionalism and elitism can play in the making and marring of a student success towards a college education. It has always been my passion to prepare the youth especially underserved and under-resourced populations for their college and career readiness. As a Black student, I have a passion for a college education because it holds the key to unleash human potentials that lead to success. "How particularly to use education effectively as a lever for social and economic mobility-that is, to benefit those young people who have few other means of advancement-not family connections, not social networks, not high schools with strong career training..." (Hoffman, 2005, p.4). It is my desire to champion the cause of the empowerment of Black and low-income folks in the United States, and beyond. This can happen through college and career education.

1.3.1 Statement of the Research Questions

In the course of the research of this nature, any or all of these could be the subject of investigation: the benefits of the program, the program itself, the institutional outcome and student success (Purnell, 2014). Student success among other things is one of the most necessary and important outcomes to monitor (Purnell, 2014). In this context, the access and success of Black students and students from low-income families are the focus of our study. The study will concentrate on the following researchable questions.

The Research Questions

- (1) How can information and input based on lived experiences of diverse student populations be used to facilitate understanding and improvement of dual enrollment programs?
- (2) What are the major dynamics that promote equitable recruitment, persistence, and success of Black and low-income underserved students in dual enrollment programs based on the experiences and perspectives of program practitioners?

Thematic Investigative Inquiry

Underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs due to inadequate preparation by educators for college and poor funding of the programs contribute to their lack of college and career readiness and success. This study will investigate how these themes; broad-based access, quality opportunity, congenial learning environment, familial and community engagement, academic, financial, and psycho-social support make for equitable participation, persistence, and success of Black and low-income students in the dual enrollment programs. Others are efficacy and close collaboration between high school and post-secondary institution. These components, features, and dynamics hold the keys to the equitable participation, persistence, and success of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs.

Meanwhile, it is my claim that the underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs due to inadequate preparation for college, and poor funding of the programs contribute to their lack of college and career readiness. Inadequate funding and poor preparation of Black and low-income students for college are not only urgent problems but also ones for which something can be done. "Though

defining and framing the problem may be related, framing has to do with expanding the political and normative assumptions that are underlying the problem" (Mintrop, 2016, p.41). Hence, a review of the normative and political undertone of the problem will lead to an extensive review of relevant kinds of literature in the study.

Chapter 2: A Review of the Relevant Literature

In this chapter, the researcher examines relevant kinds of literature to deepen an understanding of the social-educational problem of underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs, due to inadequate preparation for college by educators and poor funding of the programs. This study employs different theories namely Critical Race Theory (CRT), Social Capital Theory (SCT), Cultural Capital Theory (CCT), and Validation Theory (VT) to examine the problem of the underrepresentation in dual enrollment programs. Let us examine the historical development of dual enrollment programs.

2.0 Historical Excursus on Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment programs arose in the 70s to provide high achieving students with an opportunity to remain engaged in high school with the rigorous curriculum (Kim, Kirby, & Debra, 2006; Rogers & Kimpston, 1992). They have almost maintained the same purpose nationally (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Kim, Kirby, and Debra (2006) trace the origin of dual enrollment from its institutional inception in the 1970s to its widespread appeal in the 1980s-from at the state level to the national level. However, since its inception in the 70s, dual enrollment has been spreading very fast in various colleges and high schools across the United States (Bailey & Karp, 2003). Initially, the creation of a dual enrollment program was to provide a rigorous curriculum to high ability students (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Barnett and Stamm (2010) find that the problem of underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment is as old as the program itself.

Dual enrollment programs in its original intent and design did not include a wide range of students of diverse abilities but for very high ability students (Benbow & Lupinski, 1996; Gross & van Vliet, 2005; Howley et.al.2013). Often, dual enrollment was recommended for students with IQ 160 and above (Gross, 1992). It did not consider the interests and needs of the average and at-risk students. Dual program is “part of a family of long-established educational arrangements whose general purpose has been to promote the intellectually appropriate academic engagement of high school students” (Howley et. al., 2003, p.80). The scope and kind of dual enrollment programs notwithstanding, state policies have always favored the provision of advanced educational programs to high ability students (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). This is evidenced by the high test scores and college placement examinations, which students ought to meet in order to be eligible for dual enrollment programs (Barnett & Stamm, 2010).

However, beginning early 2000s the emphasis shifted from gifted students to include average students (Howley, et.al. 2013), and even at-risk students (Job for the Future, 2008). “Thus, although these programs are not new, the idea that they should be accessible to a broad range of students represents a new approach” (Karp and Hughes, 2008b, p.840). Many students including “students with poor attendance, struggling learners...and under-credited” began to look up to dual enrollment for enhancement (Job for the Future, 2008, p.2). Though, the programs have been targeted to provide opportunity to a wide range of students including minorities, low-income students, would be first-generation college students (Brewer, Stern & Ahn, 2007; Hoffman, 2005; Hughes, 2010), the programs remain elitist in their access and opportunity (Gross, 1992; Ross, 1994). Hoffman (2005) submits that with the promotion of dual enrollment as an

acceleration program rather than just for gifted students, it benefits a broad spectrum of students. The program is now not only for academic-bound students but also for technical and career students (Foster, 2010). In some states, technical career students and candidates for Associate degrees make up half the number of dual enrollment students (Hoffman, 2005).

Howley et. al. (2013) observes that with the passage of time, “the tenor of the discourse shifted from academic excellence to academic equity” (p.80). The intent of dual enrollment is to bridge the gap between high school preparation and the admission requirements of post-secondary institutions that so many high school students are not able to overcome (The Education Trust, 1999; Venezia & Jaeger, 2013). Ethnic minorities and Black students are worse off in this situation (Bryant, 2015). According to Krueger (2006), it is about 20 percent of ninth grade students who will graduate with a college degree by age 24. This is not a good situation. Dual enrollment is likely to increase significantly the percentage of ninth graders who will be graduating with college degrees by age 24.

Dual enrollment provides an easy transition to college; motivates students with rigorous curriculum and enhances college retention rates (Hoffman, 2005). One of the strongest predictors of college degree completion is the intensity, rigor, and quality of high school students’ curriculum (Adelman, 1999). Dual enrollment provides all students the opportunity to have rigorous, and an enhanced curriculum that makes for better understanding, deeper meaning and achievement (Adelman, 1999; Fincher-Ford, 1997). Dual enrollment program is an increasingly efficacious way of preparing students for, gives easy access to, and success in college (Foster, 2010; Hugo, 2001), while benefiting

every spectrum of students (An, 2013a). Next, the study details some of the extents of underrepresentation found within dual enrollment programs.

2.1.0 Chronicling the Underrepresentation of Black and Low-income Students

While the White and high-income students are proportionately represented in dual enrollment programs, the Black and low-income students are underrepresented (Museus, Lutovsky, & Colbeck, 2007; Zinth, 2014). In a similar manner, White students and Asian students have a half or more enrollment in high school college credit programs compared to a third or less of enrollment found among African Americans, Native Americans, and Latinos (Welner & Carter, 2013). These studies Howley, Howley, Howley, and Duncan, (2013); Museus, Lutovsky, and Colbeck, (2007); and Pretlow, and Wathington, (2014) while different in the research ambitions they set for themselves, they are similar in promoting equitable participation in dual enrollment for all students. Museus, Lutovsky, and Colbeck (2007) set out to determine who participates in dual enrollment in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and found that while the White and Asian high school students participated at a proportionately high rate, the Black and Latino students did not have equitable representation in the 2003-4 academic year. In the same study, while students with low poverty level participated at a very high rate in dual enrollment, those with high poverty level participated at a very low rate. More so, while White students made up 81% of those who attend the two-year institution, they constituted 93% of those who attend four-year universities. On the other hand, while the Blacks and Latinos made up of 11% and 4% of those who attend the two-year institution, they made up 3% and 1% of those who attend four-year institution respectively.

Meanwhile, a theoretical review of the research on the issue indicates that underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in comparison to their White and high-income counterparts is not only pervasive but also persistent locally and nationally (Carter, 2006). States after state data indicate that Black students compared to their White counterparts are underrepresented (Zinth, 2014). For example in states like Washington, Ohio, and Illinois, Black students remain underrepresented in dual enrollment programs (Zinth, 2014). In Ohio, during the 2013 fiscal year, while 78% of White students participated in dual enrollment only 7% of Black students did so (Zinth, 2014). In the state of Washington, in the year 2012, there was an underrepresentation of all races and ethnicities except Asian and Caucasians in dual enrollment programs (Zinth, 2014). Similar results were obtained in Colorado, Florida, and North Carolina. Of exception was the State of Massachusetts; in the 2009-2010 academic year, minorities and people of low socioeconomic status (SES) almost caught up with their White counterparts in dual enrollment at a completion rate of 72.97% to 84.17% respectively (Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Program 2008-2010 Outcomes). Yet, the gap remains.

The study of Pretlow and Wathington (2014) indicate that although there was an increase in dual enrollment participation for all subgroups after policy changes, the progress did not make any big shift in uniform distribution, as minority groups remained underrepresented when compared to their representation in the general student population in Virginia. The changes included the following: First, high schools must inform all students of dual enrollment opportunities and second, selected freshmen and sophomores were eligible to participate (Virginia plan for dual enrollment..., 2005). Additionally, the underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs

affects not only low achieving, and average ability students but also high-achieving Black students (Contreras, 2011). Minority students, students of color and low-income students when compared to their White and Asian counterparts are less likely to be classified in honors, gifted and talented programs (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Zinth, (2014) while reflecting on the need to increase students' access to and success in dual enrollment observes that the programs have become a national phenomenon as they are offered in every state; statewide policies are currently in 47 states. Early 2000s witness indicates that many states made early college and dual enrollment programs available to a wider spectrum of students including minority students, low-income students, and would be first-generation college students (Education Commission of the States, 2012). According to National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 2003) in the school year 2002-2003, more than 87% of America's public high schools offered their students the chance to earn college credit before their graduation.

Lochmiller, Sugimoto, Muller, Mosier, and Williamson, (2016) find that in Kentucky, during academic years 2009-10 and 2012-13, one out of every five students in grade levels 11 and 12 participated in dual enrollment programs. They indicated that there was a high rate of participation in dual enrollment for White students, high-income students, students with highest GPA and ACT scores, which cannot be said consistently of Black and low-income students. In general, while there was 85 percent rate completion in courses offered, the rate of courses completed was lower for Black students, and low-income students (Lochmiller, et.al. 2016). Although the number of high schools nationwide offering dual enrollment programs has grown to 82% in the 2011-12 academic year (Thomas, Marken, Gray, & Lewis, 2013), it is still evident that apart from

Massachusetts, minorities and people of low socioeconomic status tend to be underrepresented in the programs (Zinth, 2014).

Furthermore, Pretlow and Wathington (2014) indicated that policy change in dual enrollment has some positive impact in the access, participation, and enrollment at the 4-year institution for all students but did not do much to remedy disproportionate underrepresentation of minorities in the dual enrollment program in Virginia. So, Museus, Lutovsky, and Colbeck, (2007) as well as Pretlow, and Wathington, (2014) find that racial/ ethnic minorities are underrepresented in dual enrollment programs and call for action to remedy this anomaly. Given the fact that fast-growing subgroups are those who are lagging behind in dual enrollment participation, developing strategies that encourage their greater participation is very much desirable (Museus, Lutovsky, & Colbeck, 2007; Pretlow, & Wathington, 2014). Howley et. al. (2013) researched the challenges and opportunities for increasing the participation of all students in dual enrollment programs. Howley et.al (2013) found that institutional motives, organizational structures, pecuniary gains, and cross-border educators exert some influence for better or worse in increasing the number of participating students in dual enrollment programs.

Policy change in Virginia brought about an increase in the number of students who entered four-year postsecondary institutions without investigating who benefited more based on their race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (Pretlow & Wathington, 2014). It was Museus, Lutovsky, and Colbeck, (2007) who went further to indicate that in Pennsylvania the White and affluent students entered four-year institutions at a disproportionately high number than racial/ ethnic minorities and low-income students. While Museus, Lutovsky, and Colbeck, (2007) were dealing with status quo as it existed

in Pennsylvania, Pretlow, and Wathington, (2014) dealt with the effect of 2005 policy change in Virginia. It is estimated that by broadening access to dual enrollment programs “...students educational aspirations will be enhanced through measures to increase the rigor of high school curriculum, reduce the cost of college, and extend a wider range of academic courses to rural or economically disadvantaged school districts” (Barnett & Stamm, 2010, p.6). The controversies continue.

2.1.1 The Controversy: Advanced vs. Enhancement Programs

Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, and Paul Robeson exemplify the sustenance of hope even in the face of stiff and stringent oppositions (Preskill, & Brookfield, 2009). This problem is one in which some individuals see Black and low-income students as the architect of their own misfortune. They emphasize equal opportunity rather than equity, color blindness rather than affirmative action. They maintain a deficit view of Black and low-income students instead of a resilient and affirmative view. They view the lack of access and opportunity of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment from a deficit perspective. They attribute the lack of access and opportunities of Black and low-income students as arising from their own individual bad choices, indolence and lack of self-determination but are unwilling to touch on the systemic failures, structural injustice, and inequity occasioned by the economic and cultural matrix. The opponents of this cause envision as a solution limiting the access of Black and low-income students to such subjects as music, literature, and arts. They believe that by shutting them out of these elective subjects, they will have ample opportunity to increase their test scores in other subjects such as reading, math, and science.

The controversy ranges whether dual enrollment is an advanced or enhancement program. On one hand, some argue that it is an advanced program meant only for gifted students. From this perspective, they claim that it keeps them engaged, free them from boredom in the last school years. Meanwhile, Karp and Hughes (2008a) explain that some educators are concerned that the admission of average and low ability students will either cause such students to begin their college life with failing grades or colleges will be compelled to compromise their academic rigor and standard in order to accommodate them. Bailey, Hughes & Karp (2002) observed, “Some analysts argue that open door policy at community colleges and even at many four-year schools, gives confusing signals to high school students” (p.2). Some policymakers and analysts continue to entertain concern with regard to the quality of dual enrollment offered at high schools (Boswell, 2001; Speroni, 2011). Other major concerns regarding dual enrollment offered at high school are that it constitutes an excessive workload to high school teachers recruited to teach dual enrollment courses and the perception that the college curriculum in order to be accessible to high school students needs to be dumbed down (Boswell, 2001).

On the other hand, however, some scholars have argued dual enrollment as an enhancement program with the potential to challenge average and emerging students to do well (An, 2013a; Hoffman, 2005; Karp & Hughes, 2008a). An, (2013a) one of the main advocates of dual enrollment as enhancement program, found that it is a veritable means of preparing for, gives easy access to, and success in college for a wide range of students. The researcher’s view, however, is that dual enrollment programs are neither glorified secondary school subjects nor a watered down college classes but rather real

college credit-based programs. It should serve as an equity-oriented program providing for both advancements of gifted students as well as enrichment of emerging students. In Florida, for example, with equitable access to dual enrollment, the Black students who participated in dual enrollment programs enrolled in postsecondary education at the rate of 75% to 45% in comparison to their Black non-dual enrollees (Krueger, 2006).

In order to increase diversity and promote pluralistic inclusion, equity-oriented goals need to be assessed and monitored from time to time (Cassidy, Keating, & Young, 2010). If it remains unmet, there is need to increase the chances of the underrepresented student populations through adequate prior preparation and academic supports to ensure their success in college courses (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010; Purnell, 2014). Let us review some examples of dual enrollment programs in the U.S. to see what we can learn from them with regard to equity and social justice.

2.2.0 Some Examples of Dual Enrollment Programs in the US

Florida Dual Enrollment Programs

Hunt and Carroll (2006) present Florida Dual Enrollment and how the state policy shift in intention affected the strategies used by the Lake City Community College (LCCC) to support the transition of underrepresented students in their transition to college. They submit that Florida's Accelerated Program was established in 1979 with the following goals: compress college time, widen curriculum options, and to increase the course rigor. During the 1990s the legislative intent was extended to increase the number of students who could participate in the program including private school students, while in 1996 with the Senate Bill 186 homeschool students were also included (Hunt & Carroll, 2006). In 1979, the legislators passed a Bill and made it the responsibility of high

school staff and community college leaders to create awareness for dual enrollment programs and to increase greater students' access and participation (Hunt & Carroll, 2006). In addition, the state of Florida developed a course-numbering system that made it mandatory for all post-secondary institutions to accept credits earned through dual enrollment programs (Hunt & Carroll, 2006).

With the passage of time, they observed a paradigm shift as legislative priority moved from making students' college ready to saving money for the state and freeing up spaces for schools and colleges (Hunt & Carroll, 2006). With these laws coupled with the one in 2004/05 that placed a limit on the class size of public schools, LCCC dual enrollment soared as it catered for "five North Central Florida counties: Baker, Columbia, Dixie in academic as well as in career programs" (Hunt & Carroll, 2006, p.44). Given the rural nature of LCCC and its remoteness from some of the counties, the institute recruited qualified school teachers, as well as college faculties to be involved in teaching dual enrollment courses in and off the campus with face to face, online, video conferencing, and televised classes (Hunt & Carroll, 2006). Notwithstanding the increase in the number of participants in dual enrollment programs in Florida, state's universities attitude of giving preference to those who participated in AP courses over accredited dual enrollment candidates remain a matter of concern (Hunt & Carroll, 2006).

Florida State operates a statewide dual enrollment program and course offerings during, after classes or summer term (Allen 2010). In 2006, over 37,000 high school students participated with average student completing five courses in Florida dual enrollment (Allen, 2010). It is required for eligibility that students be in public, private or home school; meet 3.0 unweighted GPA or at least 2.0 for students who aspire for Career

and Technical education (Allen, 2010). Other requirements include passing the College Placement Test (CPT), have a minimum SAT/ACT/FCAT scores with written approval from parents or those in loco parentis (Allen, 2010). Tuition is free for public, private and home school students (Allen, 2010). Textbooks are free for public school students while private and home school students bear the cost of their textbooks (Allen, 2010; Florida Department of Education, 2004). Florida college credit applies concurrently both for college transcript and for high school diploma (Allen, 2010). Florida has a statewide course numbering system (SCNS) with over 100,000-assigned distinct course numbers that makes course transfer easy (Allen, 2010).

The Broward Academy of Community College, Florida

Koszoru (2005) substantiates one of the best practices in dual enrollment in Florida known as “The College Academy” (p.25). Its formation was in 2001 following the collaboration between Broward County (Florida) Public schools, and Broward Community College in an attempt to reform ordinary high school (Koszoru, 2005). She made use of interviews and participant observation to describe the college academy, which is located within the college and “is defined by rigor, relevance, relationships and responsibility” (p.26). On the issue of rigor, one student Angelina has this to say about the college academy; it “presents much more of a challenge to us students, and when you are challenged more, you learn more” (p.26). Koszoru taught “English composition, American literature, and Creative Writing” (p.26) and said that one must blend the rigor for which college curriculum is known for with teaching that is suited to high school students (Koszoru, 2005).

Given the flexible scheduling at College Academy, the students are able to cover in two years 12 to 18 credit hours in composition and literature beyond what is required for a diploma or an Associate degree (Koszoru, 2005). She states that the mission of the accelerated program is to help students from diverse backgrounds and intellectual aptitudes to acquire the knowledge and the skills they need to succeed not only in school but also in life endeavor. Unlike in high schools where students take courses and electives, which may not relate to their prospective career, at college academy students have the leeway to choose the courses that are relevant to their future aspirations (Koszoru, 2005).

The students receive care and individualized attention from the administrator, academic staff, and counselor who watch and guide their achievements and college admission processes (Koszoru, 2005). The students support one another as they complete their associate degree in two years with a majority earning a 3.5 GPA average (Koszoru, 2005). She notes that at College Academy, it does not take students time to realize that freedom goes with responsibility, as there is no bell, no hall passes, and no senior prefect, yet students are responsible for managing their academic progress and goals. Broward Community College's dual enrollment program of Florida synchronized high school learning and college faculty expectations and is able to scaffold students steadily into postsecondary institutions-especially students who might not have made it to college otherwise (Hoffman, 2005).

Dual Enrollment Practices of Florida, Utah, and New York

Hoffman (2005) proposes some best ways a state can use dual enrollment to promote postsecondary success for the underrepresented student populations and what can be

learned from the practices of Florida, Utah, and New York. She contends that to make dual enrollment a key factor in improving college access and success requires innovative thinking in its mission, policy, and law. She notes that by adding support upfront at the eleventh and twelfth grades, a state can actually benefit in a reduced cost in the overall cost of obtaining a Bachelors' degrees for students (Hoffman, 2005). She submits that policymakers, educators, and the public are unanimous in their agreement that in order to attain a middle-class standard of living, the youths need post-secondary credentials, which have not seen much progress since 1980 (Hoffman, 2005).

Hoffman (2005) indicates that from 2003-2004, Florida registered 34,762 students in credit courses but had only 2% increase in participation from 2002-03 to 2003-04 academic year with 9% Black, 10% Hispanic, 4% Asian and less than 1% Native American participants. In Utah, there were 23,384 enrollees in credit courses, with a 6.8% increase from 2002-03 to 2003-04 with no available differentiated data on how the minority participated (Hoffman, 2005). The City University of New York had 14,170 student participants in credit courses with 10% increase from 2002-03 to 2003-04 with 22.2 % of Black, 20.2% of White, 18.8% Hispanic, and 20% Asian (Hoffman, 2005). Further, Hoffman, (2005) proffers some guidelines for reframing dual enrollment policy as follows: “(i) The mission to serve a wide range of students (ii) The program is embedded within a K-16 structure, and a high school reform initiative (iii) There is equal access to all the state's schools and, (iv) Concurrent credit as a proficiency-based acceleration mechanism” (p.12). Other principles as enunciated by Hoffman (2005) are: (v) “The secondary and postsecondary sectors share responsibility for dual enrollment students (vi) The program collects data for purposes of assessing impact and improving

the program and, (vii) Funding mechanisms are based on the principle of no cost to students and no harm to partnering institutions” (Hoffman, 2005, p.12). In closing, Hoffman (2005) suggests that the application of these patterns will benefit the underrepresented students in college as well as other students in general.

The Santa Monica College Dual Enrollment in California

Dual Enrollment for Underrepresented Student Populations is seminal theoretical research that dwells on one of the best practices in the field of dual enrollment program. Hugo (2001) examines qualitative data to describe Santa Monica College (SMC) dual enrollment. Hugo sees it as a program that facilitates the transition from high school to postsecondary education for diverse student populations, especially for the at-risk groups. “Traditionally, underserved students, whose college options have suffered in the light of a hostile political climate evidenced by the Hopwood decision, Proposition 209, and Proposition 187, may gain access to college curricula and develop a positive academic self-image based on successful participation in a dual enrollment program” (Hugo, 2001, p.67). The research sheds light on California 209 as approved in November 1996 which dictates that state and local governments cannot discriminate against or give preference to anybody or group solely on the ground of sex, color, race or ethnicity (Hugo, 2001). Similarly, Proposition 209 prescribes that “college admission should be based solely on merit as defined by grades and scores on standardized tests” (Hugo, 2001, p.70).

In the face of these stringent equal measures, Hugo (2001) submits that Santa Monica College through its dual enrollment programs provides a long-term strategy to enhance the preparation of historically disadvantaged and at-risk minority students to give them a competitive edge in college admission. The Santa Monica College dual

enrollment achieves these feats through various strategies such as: (i) “Saturday Science Program- Introduction to Cell Biology & Human Biology (ii) Human development course- Orientation to higher education (iii) Students attend classes for six hours a day on Saturdays for nine weeks” (Hugo, 2001). Others are (iv) the college sponsor high school students to come to campus to attend biology class, and (v) students are provided with instructors and counselors who motivate them to strive and aspire to higher education (Hugo, 2001). The article concludes that the overall intent of the program with regard to the traditionally underrepresented student populations is “to make a concerted effort to increase the pool of eligible students through better teaching and counseling” (Hugo, 2001, p.72).

Lessons from example practices of dual enrollment programs. In closing, while Hunt and Carroll (2006); and Hoffman (2005) dwelt more on the policies that make for equity in dual enrollment programs, Koszoru (2005) and Hugo (2001) were more concerned with the practices that achieve the same purpose. These are some lessons garnered about the characteristics of programs that serve underrepresented student populations. The bright spots are as follows: (i) Policies that serve a wide range of students (ii) joint responsibility of both high school and colleges (iii) embedded in the K-16 initiative (iv) the funding mechanism that is free for students and harmless to partnering institutions (v) concurrent credit using a numbering system. Others are (vii) rigor, relevance, relationship and responsibility, (viii) the vital role of effective teachers and counselors (ix) individualized care, attention and support (x) peer support and collaborative learning (xi) human development courses (xii) rigor of college curriculum

with pedagogy suited for high school (xiii) alignment of high school curriculum to college expectation and (xiv) variety in the modality of offering courses.

The common denominator among the above programs is that they are united in their attempt to see that underserved student populations are provided with equitable opportunity to participate in dual enrollment programs with success. In addition, American Institutes for Research (AIR) and SRI International (SRI) (2009) report on the finding of national evaluation of early college high school initiative (ECHSI) indicates that the most effective partnerships share the following characteristics in common- purposes or goals, flexibility in terms of policies and procedures, close proximity of the high school to the college and resourceful liaison officer. This study will now share research on the impact of dual enrollment on students' educational outcomes.

2.2.1 Dual Enrollment and Students' Outcomes

Common critique to research that substantiates the effectiveness of dual enrollment programs is that students' success in college may not be due to dual enrollment programs but as a result of pre-existing high academic ability and motivation of the participating students (Karp & Hughes, 2008a). One of the problems of the research in dual enrollment field has been the issue of making sure one is comparing apples to apples, not apples to oranges. These researchers were able to achieve the feats by statistically controlling for students high schools grades and socioeconomic status to limit as much as possible any independent variable capable of influencing the students' outcomes except dual enrollment (An, 2013b; Karp and Hughes, 2008a). This consideration increased significantly the validity and reliability of their findings.

An, (2013b), for example, employs control group in the study including several indicators that influence dual enrollment participation such as measures of race, gender, and family background, family structure, and income, number of siblings in college, nativity, language spoken at home, age and home ownership. For Karp and Hughes (2008a) while controlling students' pre-existing socio-economic standard, and high school grades, found that dual enrollment students in Florida have a more academic advantage than those who did not take part in the dual enrollment. On the other hand, Foster (2010) did not give an indication of taking into consideration those personal characteristics nor did he control them statistically. These variable conditions such as high school GPA and socio-economic status could alter in a significant way the value of an outcome of an investigation.

An, (2013b) and Karp, and Hughes, (2008a) put into consideration the criticism that the effectiveness of dual enrollment participants might not be due to the programs but rather prior participating students' aptitude and motivation. An, (2013b) used as a dependent variable first-year GPA and measured college readiness depending on whether a student took at least one remedial course during college. The study found that dual enrollment programs have a positive influence on academic performance and college readiness as on the average first-year GPA was 11% points higher and dual enrollees were less likely to participate in remediation compared to non-dual enrollees (An, 2013b). Non-dual enrollment students are more likely to take remedial courses when compared to dual enrollment students (An, 2013b). "In the naïve estimates, there is a 13 percentage-point difference in the likelihood of taking a remedial course between dual enrollees and non-dual enrollees" (An, 2013b, p.417).

In addition, the study uncovered that dual enrollment benefitted students of low socio-economic status as it benefited those of high socio-economic status (An, 2013b). In spite of the fact that participation in dual enrollment may increase academic performance and college readiness for students, this increment does not necessarily translate to a reduction in academic gaps between first-generation college students and non-first generation college students (An, 2013b). Hence, the study maintains that greater effort is required beyond equal participation in order to target low-income students and first-generation students to reduce further parental-education gaps (An, 2013b).

Further, Karp and Hughes (2008a) obtained Students' grades and dataset from high schools as well as from the states of New York City and Florida to address their research questions. Karp and Hughes (2008a) employed a quantitative method for their investigation and found that dual enrollment is beneficial not just for high ability, and low ability students but also for Career and Technical Education (CTE) students. While controlling students' pre-existing socio-economic standard, and high school grades, the study found that dual enrollment students in Florida have a 1% chance of obtaining their diploma more than their non-dual enrolled ones. Though a percent chance may look minimal, however when we recall the huge number of students this one percent could represent we know that it is statistically significant. This is because we are not just dealing with numbers but with people and their lives. In Florida, dual enrolled students were more likely to enroll in college for full-time studies and nine times more likely to enroll in four-year College when compared to their non-dual enrolled counterparts (Karp & Hughes, 2008a). Though in New York, there was a null difference in persistence,

Florida dual enrollees are 4%, and 5% more likely to persist in college after 1 year and 2 years respectively compared to their non-dual enrolled peers (Karp & Hughes, 2008a).

In New York, dual enrollment students made some gains but not as great as in Florida (Karp & Hughes, 2008a). While in Florida after three years the dual enrolled students made 15 more credits more than non-dual enrolled ones, in New York after three and half years, the dual enrolled students made 10 more credits when compared to their non-dual enrolled counterparts (Karp & Hughes, 2008a). In New York, CTE dual enrollment participants had 26% and 24% higher GPA than their non-dual enrollment peers after one year and three years respectively (Karp & Hughes, 2008a). In New York, there was no notable difference in gender comparatively, while in Florida in many cases males and those from low socio-economic background benefited more than females and the students from high socio-economic status respectively (Karp & Hughes, 2008a). Karp & Hughes (2008a) suggests that there is need to expand dual enrollment program to include CTE students and to prefer it over “credit-in-escrow” or “articulated coursework” model that requires matriculation to the partnering college before the award of college credit (Karp & Hughes, 2008a).

Moreover, dual enrollment is not only beneficial to a broad spectrum of academic-bound students but also for career and technical education students. Foster (2010) made use of quantitative data to examine the effectiveness of “the Cooperative Alliance Program” (CAP) as practiced in Oklahoma (Foster, 2010). CAP is a system that connects high school/ adults students to community colleges through technological center programs where they acquire transferable college credits (Foster, 2010). The result indicates that students who passed through CAP have more retention while making more

academic progress than those who did not (Foster, 2010). “By the fall of 2008 CAP students and non-CAP maintained full time 35, and 21, average GPA 2.899 and 1.944; hours earned 49.50 and 25.14, entering ACT Scores 17.14 and 18.03, correlation coefficient for GPA and hours earned for each group (RGPA-Hrs) .58 and .73 respectively” (Foster, 2010, p.42). Findings indicate that CAP students are more likely to remain than their non-CAP peers who are on the match toward their college degree. The study indicates that there is great value in participating in dual enrollment programs (Foster, 2010).

The studies of An, (2013b); Karp and Hughes, (2008a); and Foster (2010) are similar in so far as they highlight the advantage of dual enrollment programs with regard to academic progress toward a degree. An, (2013b) found that dual enrollment programs have a positive academic influence and college readiness as on the average, first-year GPA was 11% points higher and remediation was less for dual enrollment participants when compared to non-dual enrollees. The Florida dual enrolled students were more likely to enroll in college for full-time studies and nine times more likely to enroll in four-year College when compared to their non-dual enrolled counterparts (Karp & Hughes, 2008a). Findings from Foster (2010) indicated that CAP students with their attendant dual enrollment are more likely to be retained towards their degree attainment when compared to their non-CAP counterparts.

However, the findings of Karp and Hughes (2008a) have some slight variances with that of An, (2013b). An, (2013b) found that dual enrollment befitted students of low SES as it benefited those of high SES. However, Karp and Hughes (2008a) found that in New York, there was no notable difference in gender comparison, while in Florida in many

cases, males and those from low socioeconomic background benefited more than females and the students from high socioeconomic status respectively. Foster (2010) did not consider how such personal characteristics such as gender or socio-economic status could affect the benefits of the students nor did he statistically control for such confounding characteristics. An, (2013), Karp and Hughes (2008a) and Foster (2010) share a similar interest in finding the difference dual enrollments make in the lives of participating students. They all found that dual enrollment is very beneficial to all students and dual enrollees are better off when compared to non-dual enrollees towards academic progress, college readiness, and persistence towards a college degree completion.

The bottom line is that dual enrollment is beneficial to both high-income and low-income students, male and female students, academic and career students (An, 2013b; Foster, 2010; Karp & Hughes, 2008a). In a similar manner, U.S Department of Education... (2017) found moderate and large-scale evidence that students who participated in dual enrollment have positive outcomes. The performances range from general academic achievement in high school, high school completion rate, college credit accumulation, access to college, and college completion rate. Hence, it should be encouraged to continue and be extended to every spectrum of the students with a bias in favor of low-income students and students of color in order to create parity in the programs. Let us examine the potential benefits of dual enrollment.

2.2.2 The Potential Benefits of Dual Enrollment Programs

Dual Enrollment Provides Easy Access to and Success in College and Career

First, the underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs is a serious problem because dual enrollment provides students easy access to,

and success in college. Students who participate in dual enrollment are more likely to go to college, persist and achieve higher GPA's than those who did not enroll (Foster, 2010; Hugo, 2001; Koszoru, 2005). On a similar note, a national study indicates that students who participated in dual enrollment completed their degree in 4.25 years compared to 4.65 years of those who did not participate in the programs (Adelman, Keating, Young, Cassidy, & Bosetti, 2008). Smith (2007) found that those who participated in dual enrollment programs completed their four-year college degree graduation rate at 83.3% compared to 39.1% of those who did not participate in dual enrollment programs. O'Brien & Nelson (2004) found that those who took part in dual enrollment programs are more likely to complete their degree sooner than those who did not. An, (2013a) using the national data of those who started their college education in 2003 found that those who participated in dual enrollment courses are 10% more likely to complete their Bachelor's degree than those who did not. The first generation of college students who participated in dual enrollment is 12% more likely to complete their Bachelor's degree when compared to first-generation college students who did not take part in dual enrollment (An, 2013a). An, (2013a) using the national dataset of 1992 high school graduates found that those who completed 6 credits in dual enrollment were 12% more likely to complete their Bachelor's degree than the rest who did not participate and 16% more likely than those who neither participated in dual enrollment nor Advanced Placement.

Dual enrollment increases the likelihood of not only access but also success for traditionally underserved students (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). In Florida, dual enrollment was instrumental in getting more students to the post-secondary institution (Hoffman,

2005). The data is particularly robust for Black students who participated in dual enrollment as they gained admission into college 70% in comparison to 45% of non-dual enrolled Black students; and Hispanic dual enrollment students enrolled 69% in comparison to 54% of non-dual enrolled students of Hispanic origin (Florida Department of Education, 2004). Krueger (2006) presents a piece of noteworthy evidence about the feasibility of dual enrollment toward the people of color in general and the Black students in particular. In Florida, with open access to dual enrollment, Black students who participated in dual enrollment programs enrolled in postsecondary education at the rate of 75% compared to 45% of their non-dual enrolled Black students (Krueger, 2006). “For the 5,000+ College Now students who entered CUNY in fall 2003, 45 percent entered senior colleges; 31 percent entered comprehensive colleges (award both Associate’s and Bachelor’s degrees); and 24 percent entered community colleges” (The City University of New York and New York City Public Schools, 2004). CUNY’s initial research indicates that College Now alumni are more likely to persist in their pursuit of a college degree when compared to their New York City public students as measured by their third-semester continuous enrollment rates (The City University of New York and New York City Public Schools, 2004).

Dual enrollment has the great potential to improve and transform the access and success of underrepresented Black and low-income student populations. Administrative datasets from Florida and the City University of New York (CUNY) were the basis of the following research (Karp, Calcagno, Hughes, Jeong, & Bailey, 2007). Karp et.al. (2007) found that dual enrollment students are more likely to graduate from high school and enroll in college more than those who did not participate in dual enrollment programs

both at CUNY and at Florida. The result remains the same while controlling for differences in students' characteristics such as previous academic performance, race, gender and socio-economic status (Karp, et.al. 2007). Swanson (2008) examines a federal dataset of 213,000 dual enrollment students that graduated in 1992. Swanson found that dual enrollees were 12% more likely to gain admission into college within seven months of graduation from high school and 16% to 21% more likely to earn Bachelor's degree than students who did not partake in dual enrollment. Dual credit programs provide an opportunity to complete a semester, a year and sometimes two years of college work, which may be an equivalent of Associate or Baccalaureate degree while still in high school (Andrews, 2004; Koszoru, 2005).

Dual Enrollment makes College Education Cost Effective

Second, dual enrollment programs save money in the overall cost of education in the making of a young college graduate (Hoffman, 2005; Hoffman, Vargas & Santos, 2009). College tuition is on the increase with many students competing for available spaces (Hoffman, 2005). Johnson and Brophy (2006) found that one of the main reasons for students' participation in dual enrollment programs is to reduce the high cost of obtaining their college degrees. Findings indicate that the students in both 11th and 12th grades were unanimous in sharing a financial concern, and tasting college courses as their chief motivating factors in their decision to engage in dual enrollment programs (Johnson & Brophy, 2006). Dual enrollment enhances high school completion rate and the potential to reduce the time required to complete a degree (Hoffman, Vargas, & Santos, 2009). Earning college credits while in high school can reduce the time and cost to obtain a college degree (Boswell, 2001; Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010; Hoffman, Vargas, &

Santos, 2009). Students, parents and school administrators affirm that the most motivating factors for participation in the dual enrollment programs are to start early as well as to save costs in college education (Office of the Legislative Auditor State of Minnesota, 1996). In Minnesota, for example, students in Postsecondary Enrollment Options and their parents saved about \$10.9 million in tuition, fees, books and other materials in 1993-94 academic year, which is what it would have cost them in the same postsecondary courses outside the programs (Office of the Legislative Auditor State of Minnesota, 1996). At the University of Washington, the Running start programs saved parents \$12.5 million in tuition and \$24.6 million in taxpayers' fund amounting to an average of \$37.12 million dollars in the 1999-2000 academic year (Andrews, 2004).

Students who have received dual credits for completing a particular college course can apply those credits to both high school diploma and college requirements thereby allowing them to save both time and money (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Students with grades of "C" and above on transferable courses can transfer their credit hours to colleges and universities, thereby saving money and shortening their time to degree completion (Harris, 2003). Students who accumulate enough credit as to enter college as sophomores succeeded in reducing both out-of-pocket costs as well as student loan by about 25% (Schworm, 2008). It brings down the taxpayers' dollar that is used to assist, support, and sanction school-aged children who drop out of school, as the programs will motivate many of them to proceed into college (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Hence, it saves money for students, families, school districts, colleges, local and state governments, as these agencies are involved in one way or the other in the funding of public education and college degree (Adelman, 2006; Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Educational leaders and

policymakers are encouraging participation in dual enrollment as a panacea for the high cost of college education for students and their families (Krueger, 2006).

Dual Enrollment makes for Personal, Social and Psychological Maturity

Third, dual enrollment programs provide many opportunities for positive self-concept, as well as social and psychological maturity (Noble & Childers, 2008; Shepherd, Nicpon & Doobay, 2009). Rural students who participated in dual enrollment place great interests in studying with mature people and with enhanced college curriculum (Hugo, 2001; Krueger, 2006; Johnson and Brophy, 2006; Speroni, 2011). Students in dual enrollment get experiences of what it means to be real college students and obtain confidence and skills that can assist them in optimal academic performance (Barnett & Stamm, 2010; Hughes, 2010; Klein & Lewis, 2005). Medvide & Blustein (2010) found that diverse students who participated in dual enrollment show greater self-reflection, self-knowledge, and have better insight and attitude toward life in general. Moreover, accelerated learning offers them the incentive, pecuniary inducement, and encouragement to continue into college (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Though the 11th and the 12th graders share equally with regard to pecuniary and personal reasons for their enrollment, 12 graders gave higher priority for academics and social issues as their motivating factors (Johnson & Brophy, 2006).

Dual Enrollment helps Low-achieving Students meet High Academic Standard

Fourth, Karp & Hughes (2008a) allude that some educators are concerned that with the admission of low ability candidates, students will begin their college life with failing grades or colleges will be forced to lower their standards in order to accommodate such caliber of students. However, Karp & Hughes (2008a) contend that dual enrollment has

been helping struggling students not to drop out of schools, attain high academic standard, aspire to go to and acclimatize easily to college life. Dual enrollment offers high schoolers the opportunity to acquire skills that are helpful in high school, college and workplace through enhanced academic rigor (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). Johnson and Brophy (2006) indicate that students' reasons for enrolling in dual credit hinge on academics, fiscal matters, social issues and personal preferences (Johnson & Brophy, 2006). Besides the great advantages dual enrollment hold for students, many believe that it is beneficial to high schools, colleges, families, employers, and the society at large (Allen, 2010; Hoffman, 2005).

2.2.3 The Benefits of Dual Enrollment Programs to Schools and Colleges

Dual enrollment creates a veritable opportunity for schools to collaborate with colleges (Boswell, 2001). This opportunity is laden with so many benefits. Given that high schools are under immense pressure to produce an increasing number of students with adequate college and career readiness, a collaboration between colleges and high schools can overcome "a fixation on state mandates and quick fixes" (Otte, 2002, p.106). Otte (2002) states that "True collaboration, based on equal partnerships and mutual respect, produces greater independence and self-realization. And it practices what it preaches: it models the very learning it seeks to cultivate" (p.118).

Dual enrollment relies heavily on the partnership between the school district or local school and the college (Boswell, 2001). "Aligning high school and college curricula is most effectively achieved through close collaboration across educational systems" (Barnett & Stamm, 2010, p.11). Moreover, adequate cooperation, collaboration, and communication across secondary and postsecondary systems are crucial to ensure the

benefits of dual enrollment programs (Karp & Hughes, 2008b). “Widespread communication about program demands and curricular pathways are important to give students tools that they need to succeed in dual enrollment courses and enroll in college” (Barnett & Stamm, 2010, p.5). Adequate collaboration between high school instructors and college faculties can give rise to an enhanced curriculum capable of producing students who are college and career ready (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). One result of Perkins legislation is that high school and Community college career and technical courses are so aligned that it is able to guarantee a smooth transition to college (Taylor, Borden, & Park, 2015).

Some state policy has some regulations governing this partnership. For example, some state requires community college to enter into a partnership agreement with their school districts (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Other states are more flexible about the nature of the relationship between high schools and colleges and leave the arrangement in the hands of local high school and college leadership (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Barnett and Stamm (2010) affirm that 46 states have statewide policy while 4 states have local district and institutional guidelines with regard to dual enrollment programs. However, “Success and sustainability of Dual Enrollment programs rest on the strength of the local district-college partnership” (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010, p.6).

College and their partnering high school usually seal their pacts with a memorandum of understanding (MOU). The MOU is a legal document that specifies how high schools and colleges will collaborate and share responsibilities with regard to students’ access, finances, how and what courses to offer, who teaches the courses and where they are to

be taught (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). The initial involvement of the high-level educational leaders at the college and high schools is very important for the overall implementation and sustenance of dual enrollment programs (AIR/SIR, 2009). The extent of the coverage of the program determines whether it will be manned by a district coordinator, or a principal of the school or leading teacher who will work in close collaboration with college director of dual enrollment programs (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010).

On the college side, the liaison officer could be college vice-president, dean, departmental head or staff member charged with managing the affairs of dual enrollment programs (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). It is the responsibility of the coordinator of the programs to ensure that the opportunity of dual enrollment programs is available to all students irrespective of the color, race or socioeconomic status (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). The liaison facilitates students' transition to college, helps in scheduling classes and offer support to them while serving as go-between high school and college (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). The program director needs to be a resourceful leader who is able to carry the college staff and faculty along and solicit their buy-in into the program (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). The person should be a bridge builder who is able to bring stability to the program in the moment of crisis (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010).

High schools stand to enjoy some potential benefits due to their participation in dual enrollment programs. First, high schools that collaborate with colleges in the practice of dual enrollment programs are more likely to learn precisely the expectations of students at a college level and align the curricula to meet the expectations (American Association

of State Colleges and Universities -AASCU, 2002). Second, high schools stand to benefit from the enhanced curriculum of dual enrollment programs and are therefore better able to prepare students for postsecondary education (AASCU, 2002). Third, colleges serve as levers in bridging the gap between high schools and business resources, and community-based organizations since they are better acquainted in this areas than high schools (Amey, Eddy & Ozaki, 2007).

Further, dual enrollment opens up a new vista for the recruitment and retention of students in this era of dwindling college enrollment (Allen, 2010). It is possible to retain students by colleges because the students have completed some college-level work with the institution (Allen, 2010). Boswell (2001) claims that students tend to continue their college education with an institution who collaborated with their high school. In recent times, colleges and universities are increasingly taking up greater social and community responsibilities, and dual enrollment is one of the visible ways for a college to be in touch with their local base (Hoffman, 2005, Krueger, 2006).

2.2.4 The Unintended Consequences of Inequity in Dual Enrollment

An Increase in School Dropouts

School completion has become an essential roadmap for higher education and eventual high paying jobs (Doll, Eslami, & Walters, 2013). Students shut out of the motivation and engagement, which enriched curriculum of dual enrollment provides to high school students are more likely to drop out of school (Adelman, Keating, Young, Cassidy, & Bosetti, 2008). Karp and Hughes (2008a) opine that dual enrollment prevents "...high school dropout and increasing student aspirations..." (p.14). Roderick (2008) reports in ten years to come more than 5 million students are likely to drop out of school.

Educational leaders and policymakers are increasingly aware that dual enrollment is an antidote to high school and college dropouts (Adelman, 2006). Each year it is estimated that 1.2 million students drop out of school, many falling into the class of the unemployed, the poor and security risks (The dropout crisis and poverty, 2016). In the 2014-15 school year, the dropout rate for the state public school grade 7-12 stands at 0.94% for the White students representing 5,400 students out of 572,141, compared to the Black students that stand at 3.04% representing 3,644 out of 119,729 students (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2016). The disproportion in the percentage of Black students dropping out of school system when compared to that of the White students is glaring. The situation is troubling when considered against the potential dangers associated with dropping out of school.

Lack of College and Career Preparedness

The credible evidence of under-preparedness of high school students is that about half of them entering college take remedial courses; 60% of the students entering two-year institution take remedial course compared to 40% of those who enter four-year institution (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001a). This is significant because remediation prolongs the time it takes students to get to actual college-level courses, increases the cost, dampens the spirits of the participants, and engenders lower graduation rates (Adelman, 2001). There is an affirmation that the number of students who have earned a college degree in 4 years in the last decade is on the decline (Adelman, et.al, 2008). Research indicates that students who take remedial courses and those who fail low-level credit courses are more likely to spend a long time in a post-secondary institution than those who do not (Andrews, 2004).

One of the best ways of measuring and predicting college and career readiness of students is through the American College Test (ACT). Generally speaking, 31 percent of the entire class of 2014 who sat for the ACT exam failed to meet any readiness benchmark in English, Math, Reading, and Science while 62 percent of Black students failed to meet any (Adams, 2015, n.p). Education is a determinant factor in one's life. The level of one's education will determine a person's income, social class, and even health (Cordes & Miller, 2005). This is significant because a lack of college and career education has serious social and economic consequences. One without quality education is disadvantaged when compared to someone who has received a robust education (Cordes & Miller, 2005). Cordes and Miller (2005) advocate for quality education for all children irrespective of their socio-economic status or race. The only way to ensure this equal education is through equity, inclusion and social justice in the educational system.

ACT (2014) continues to throw its weight behind the common core standard in so far as it focuses on salient standards that prepare students for college and career readiness. However, academic readiness is just one of the several factors that prepare students for educational success (ACT, 2014). Other elements that make for academic readiness and postsecondary success are academic behavior and informed career planning founded on interest (ACT, 2014). For the sustenance of success, all the key factors need to be monitored (ACT, 2014). Strong American Schools (2008) indicates that those who undergo remediation while in college are less likely to graduate. Dual enrollment can serve as a last resort for underserved students to have another opportunity to be well prepared before their matriculation as full- time college students. It can also lessen the need for remediation at postsecondary institutions (Boswell, 2001).

Disparity in Income

In spite of living in the US which is one of the wealthiest countries in the world (World's Richest Countries, 2014); it has been accounted that so many Black people still remain at the margin of the society when compared to their White counterparts (Gonzalez, 2005). The unemployment rate among the Black population has always doubled that of the White population. Desilver (2013) submits that in 1954 which was the first year the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics started keeping records of the unemployment rate based on race, the average unemployment rate for the White population was 5% while that of the Black population was 9.9%. As of July 2013, the White unemployment rate is accounted at 6.6% when compared to that of the Black population which was 12.6% (Desilver, 2013). As of November 2016, while the unemployment rate of the White was 4.2, that of the Blacks was 8.1 (Bureau of labor statistics, 2016). In our time, the average income of Black families is less than 60 percent that of the average White families, and the average lifespan of the Blacks are 6 years less than that of the Whites (Feagin, 2006). However, the system of oppression has changed in a significant way, the basic elements and outcomes remain the same. Today as it was in the past, the Blacks work for the Whites for low wages, the Whites still get better-paying jobs more than the Blacks (Feagin, 2006).

The huge disparity in income between the White and Black people are indicative of individual, familial, institutional reproduction of unjust enrichment of some and impoverishment of others (Feagin, 2006). This chasm shows how severe the White-on-Black oppression is on Black families whose ancestry dates back to 9-15 generations in U.S history (Feagin, 2006). Many Black people depend on unemployment benefits not

because they are old, or sick, but because they lack the necessary higher education, skills, and competencies needed to fill available job positions (Cordes & Miller, 2005). The gap in income between White and Black people is exacerbated by the gap in education beginning at a very early age (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). The counter-narrative by the Whites is that racial income inequality is due to their hard labor, yet Blacks have worked as much if not much more but have nothing to show for it (Feagin, 2006).

As a result of centuries of White-on-Black exploitation, the average White family are more likely to have a significant amount of wealth to bequeath to their children compared to the average Black family (Feagin, 2006). Ferguson (2004) describes how buses bring predominantly White children from upper-middle-class professional families residing in well to do Midland and Highland to join children from predominantly low-income Black families coming from Heartland neighborhood to Rosa Parks school. The adverse consequences of oppression go beyond impoverishment and affect the physical and psychological well-being of families and communities (Feagin, 2006). In health-care, the Black families have an infant mortality rate that is two and a half times as high as that of the Whites (Feagin, 2006).

By the year 2020, Carnevale, Smith, and Strohl (2013) project that two-thirds of job positions will require some measure of post-secondary education, with 30 percent of those jobs requiring at least Bachelor's degree and 36 of them some form of degree credentials or at least associate degree. As the eighty percent of fast-growing jobs opening up in the U.S require post-secondary education, the importance of post-secondary education in preparing present and future workforce cannot be overemphasized (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Those who are most affected by the lack of college credential

are those underserved students for whom a decent job can launch into middle-class families (Hoffman, 2005).

Overdependence on Government Subsidy

Hoffman (2005) observes that policymakers, educators, and the public agree that in order to make a middle-class wage, postsecondary education and skills are required. Postsecondary education affords more earning power compared to a lower form of education (National Center for Education Statistics-NCES, 2001b; U.S Census Bureau, 2002). This fact has led to so many youth aspiring for college education (NECS, 2001b), but a far fewer youth graduate from post-secondary institutions that would have like to do so (Bailey, Hughes, & Karp, 2002). A crucial way of bridging the gap between the upper class and the rest of the citizenry is to ensure equal education for all irrespective of race and gender (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). Equal education as recommended by Cordes and Miller is attainable only through equitable education. College graduates are more likely to contribute to the common and public goal rather than take from it in the form of public assistance (Dougherty & Reid, 2007). Dual enrollment gives easy access and success in college (An, 2013a). Underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment contributes to dropouts in schools and colleges (An, 2013a; Foster, 2010; Karp & Hughes, 2008a). Winters and Greene (2012) submit that college dropouts are much more likely to become financial burdens on the economy based on experiences. The assessment is that it could cost the U.S. over a trillion dollars in unemployment benefit, healthcare support, food, housing subsidy programs to support school dropouts (Roderick, 2008).

An Increase in Crime

It is disheartening to see many of our vibrant Black youths drop out of school, roam around the streets, and engage in illicit businesses. It increases their over-dependence in government subsidy as well as the potential for crime in the society (Dougherty & Reid, 2007; The dropout crisis and poverty, 2016). These bad decisions often bring them into direct conflict with the law; land them in jail, or sometimes they end up in dangerous scenarios resulting in violence and death. Ysseldyke, Algozzine, and Thurlow, (1992) submit that school dropouts have a higher probability of going to prison than those students who made a high school diploma and dropouts make up 82% of the prison population. These young men and women supposed to be the hope of better tomorrow if they are well prepared through adequate college education or career training. It is not that these young people love and desire the kind of lives they are living, but they seem to have little or fewer options. Often they lack adequate training and college credential to earn a decent living and become productive members of society. Yet, there are programs with research proven evidence that provide students easy access to, and success in college and career pathways. Dual enrollment programs offer many opportunities.

Weakens American Labor Market and Economic Competitiveness

The mismatch between the contemporary demands of the labor market and the supply of school system has given an impetus for high school, colleges and universities to work together (Boswell, 2001). As the shift in demographics continues in favor of the ethnic minorities, their failure in schools and lack of adequate preparation for postsecondary readiness have telling consequences in the US labor market and economy (Bryant, 2015). Parents and politicians are concerned that given the increasing cost of

high education, the availability of a well-trained workforce to compete in the global market might be dwindling (Boswell, 2001). However, an increase in the number of students who participate in dual enrollment is a plus for well-prepared competitive workforce (Boswell, 2001). The importance of post-secondary education in boosting one's economic well-being cannot be overemphasized.

Educators, policymakers, and the public agree that to earn a middle-class wage, young people need a postsecondary education (Hoffman, 2005; Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Students and parents have come to grip with the reality that the higher the level of one's education the greater the person's opportunity to attain economic prosperity (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Dual enrollment programs will reposition them to graduate from high school, become college and career ready, and transit securely to college where they will acquire the requisite knowledge, skills, and capacities for contemporary jobs, and become informed modern democratic citizens.

2.3.0 Guiding Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

The disparity in education between White and high-income students on the one hand and Black students and low-income students on the other is an indubitable fact (Howard, 2010). The controversy is on the root causes and how it can be remedied (Howard, 2010). So, is also the underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. Au (2011) indicates that core conservatives often maintain that Black students are genetically condemned to low performance and achievement. Howard (2010) opines that ultra-conservatives insist that underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in college credit programs is as a result of their bad choices, lack of merit and personal

responsibility (Howard, 2010). They deny that social structure and system have anything to do with the disparity in education (Howard, 2010).

Liberal social scientists have given an alternative to genetic explanation by offering cultural deprivation theory which has held sway in many institutions of the society including schools and colleges (Au, 2011). Unfortunately, this explanation has led to a deficit view of Black students and students from low-income backgrounds. In the 70s and 80s cultural difference, theorists offered an alternative explanation in place of cultural deprivation theory which attests to the resilience and richness of the people of color and their communities (Au, 2011; Howard, 2010). Cultural difference theorists propose culturally responsible pedagogy as a way to correct the imbalance that currently exists in the educational system and to close the opportunity gap between people of various races (Au, 2011; Howard, 2010). Race, racism, and culture have a great impact in the disparity in education between White and high-income students on the one hand, and Black and low-income students on the other hand (Howard, 2010).

Repudiation of Eugenic Explanation

This study made use of Critical Race Theory, Social Capital Theory, and Cultural Capital Theory as theoretical underpinnings in describing and making sense of the social problem of disparity in dual enrollment programs while using Validation Theory toward seeking solutions to improve the situation. The underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs are part of the educational disparity and its attendant achievement gap between White and high-income students on the one hand, and Black and low-income students on the other.

Kuhl, (2011) finds that there is nothing inherent in the genes of any race that diminishes their capacity to qualify for any educational program. This is a repudiation of eugenics movement which was prevalent in the 1920s and 1930s and up until recently which has no basis in research (Howard, 2010). Eugenic movement argues that some races are biologically determined to do well while other outgroup races are not (Howard, 2010). Students of every race and color are educable when provided with the congenial opportunity (Howard, 2010; Kuhl, 2011). The educational disparity and its brainchild of opportunity gap are sociological, environmental and human-made.

Kuhl (2011) finds that from the 6th to 8th month of a child's life, a child is capable of responding to every sound from every language in a most intense way forming data and statistics. In an investigation involving babies of various ethnic groups, she found the same result (Kuhl, 2011). She indicates that as the child grows, the ability of the child to respond to a language other than that of one's mother tongue or the one to which the child is exposed to dwindles. Moreover, this capability continues in an inverse proportion, the older the child, the lower the capability of the child to respond to sounds from a different language other than one's mother tongue or the one the child is exposed to more frequently. Though learning is a lifelong process, ages 2 to 11, so-called "window of opportunity" provides critical period when a child creates a strong pathway to growth cognitively, socially, and emotionally (David, 1998, p.52).

More importantly, Kuhl (2011) fills an important gap in the epistemology of language in the first few years of one's life. Kuhn (2011) answers the question of how children of various races are better at language acquisition when compared to adults. It reinforces the fact that the issue of the achievement gap is a product of societal

opportunity. Kuhl (2011) finds that toddlers are “citizens of the world,” while adults are culture-bound in the acquisition of language. Kuhn’s study has given impetus to brain-friendly strategies such as the need to make use of “window of opportunity”, attention span, color, intensity, and comprehensible input in the art of teaching and learning.

Kuhl (2011) study of toddlers and their language acquisition capabilities is quite trenchant. She finds that when toddlers were exposed to television and other social media, they could not learn as much as when they were exposed to humans (Kuhl, 2011). Exposure to human environment bolstered the social aspect of language acquisition in children. It is amazing how babies listen to human beings around them and are able to filter the sounds they make and use it to understand their world. This brings to the forefront the importance of human social interaction, emotional involvement, and cognitive skills in human development. The response of toddlers to this issue is an eye-opener. Apart from the fact that there are non-verbal communications, gesticulations, and emotions that help create meaning when an instructor is in the presence of learners, the response of toddlers to their social environment is indicative of the importance of social interaction in human education in general.

2.3.1 Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a dominant framework for studying race and education (Leonardo, 2013). “CRT is a framework that can be used to theorize, examine and challenge the ways race and racism implicitly and explicitly impact on social structures, practices, and discourses” (Yosso, 2005, p.70). Critical Race Theory is a worldview that the United States of American is essentially divided into the Whites who are favored by the social structure with power and privileges over and against other

targeted outgroups. Put differently, “Critical scholars define racism as a systemic relationship of unequal power between White people and people of color” (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012, p.119). It has to do with a group’s position of power and privilege which is used over and against the targeted group. The Whites are known to have been privileged in the US and as a result, when they use their power and position to discriminate or marginalize a targeted minority group it is regarded as a form of racism. To ensure its criticality, a theory must put oppression and liberation from it as the crux of its matter (Leonardo, 2013, p.22).

An examination of Critical Race Theory is pertinent with the hope of applying its patterns and principles as one examines the various facets of the social problem of underrepresentation of Black students and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. Hence, any dialogue on how to eliminate educational disparity must be matched by the historical experiences of various groups that inform current performances (Howard, 2010).

2.3.2 Systematic Racism

Critical Race Theory views racism as a normal systemic problem in the United States of America (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). White prejudice, bias, and power, when used against people of Color whether it is intentional or not, is a form of racism (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). Unlike Marxism that reduces the issue of racism to that of social class struggle, Critical Race Theory does not jettison class analysis but incorporates them as a discrete reality which could compound one’s social identity for better or for worse (Leonardo, 2013). “In effect, class attains a color within CRT discourse, but the basic discursive structure of CRT does not incorporate Marxism’s problematic, such as

fundamental analysis of capital... Class is seen through racial eyes” (Leonardo, 2013, p.35).

Racism is not just only at the micro-level, that is what individuals do, but also on a macro-level, that is what the system and structures are set up to do (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). Racism is not necessarily about the number but it is about a group position of power and privilege in a hierarchical social structure, and their capacity to influence other out-group from that position (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). Racism may be active or passive. Some examples of active racism may include racial profiling, racist jokes, racial discrimination and unnecessarily accusing people of playing a racial card (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). On the other hand, examples of passive racism may include mischievous silence, inequitable funding of schools, disinterestedness in racial issues and aversion to the cross-racial relationship (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012).

Racism viewed critically focuses on structural injustice, that is, the systematic but invisible ways that values, ideology, and traditional practices perpetuate racial disparity in education (Bensimon & Bishop, 2012). In this context, being critical requires that a connection is established between individuals, groups, national and global histories to keep the record straight regarding the difficulties faced by individuals of color (Leonardo, 2013, p.15). Critical race theory has some facts, pattern, and principles. They are (a) racism is permanent (b) whiteness is a property (c) story and counter-story (d) critique of liberalism and (e) convergence of interest.

Racism is Permanent

One lesson we can learn from the memories of the past is that U.S. society remains today as in the past a White social space to which others are trapped and have to submit

to whatever oppression that are spelled out for them by the dominant White group (Feagin, 2006). Viewed from a systematic racist perspective, the U.S. society is seen as an organized racist whole with interconnected organizations and institutions that sustain racial oppression (Feagin, 2006). In the 1700s, Thomas Jefferson was instrumental in creating documents that declared that all humans are equal (Feagin, 2006). Yet this proclamation of equality had a hypocritical aspect to it as it excluded the Blacks, indigenous people, and women for a very long time (Feagin, 2006). Further, the founding fathers of the United States like Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and George Washington were agents in the perpetuation of racial ideology, defending White power and privileges as natural and meritorious and alleging the inferiority of the Black race (Feagin, 2006). “By insisting on rhetoric that disallows a reference to race, groups affected by racism cannot...point out racism without invoking denial and offense. Colorblindness also has the perilous effect of rendering White privilege invisible and thus reinforcing its preeminence” (Taylor, 2009, p.8).

Now and as in the past, racism and its attendant oppression is not an appendix but is ingrained in the U.S structure (Leonardo, 2013). The United States’ economy was built on the enslavement of the African Americans, the genocidal killing of the Native American and appropriation of their lands (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). European colonists and their progenies created a new society through the instrumentality of active predation, oppression, and exploitation (Feagin, 2006). Racism in the U.S. is not only permanent but endemic (Leonardo, 2013). From the 1600s to the 1960s, about 90 percent of the nation’s existence, Whites have benefited significantly from government resources, assets, and programs at the exclusion of the Blacks (Feagin, 2006). Following the end of

civil war, the Blacks were freed from slavery but never benefitted from the fringe benefits of resources, and lands that were offered by the federal government to the Whites (Feagin, 2006). The federal government then distributed vast acres of land, mineral and oil rights, radio and television frequencies and other resources under her prerogative exclusively to the White populace (Feagin, 2006).

These intergenerational wealth inheritances bequeathed to the Whites at the exclusion of the Blacks due to racial discrimination, have provided White progenies with better socio-economic, political and educational opportunities not available to children of Color (Ladson-Billings, 2006). The centuries-long enrichment of the Whites is paralleled with the same period of an impoverishment of the Blacks due to racial discrimination passed on from one generation to the next (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Demographically, the Whites are normally included in the socio-economic analysis as the more advantaged group in comparison to the Blacks and the Latinos but rarely are the complicity of the Whites presented in the ongoing propagation of racial and other discriminations (Feagin, 2006). The unjust and institutionalized power, wealth and privileges of the White over and above people of color are hardly at the center of conversation (Feagin, 2006).

Whiteness is a Property

Whiteness is essentially about placing White values, culture, beauty, opinion, and stereotypes over and above that of the outgroups (Feagin, 2006). Whiteness is a property. Whiteness refers to a specific form of racism that elevates White people over and above people of Color; while rights, resources, and experiences which are assumed to be common to all are in fact available only to the White (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). White entrepreneurs and workers continue to gain from White-race privileges and the

psychological effect of Whiteness (Feagin, 2006). This is not always tangible, as it has to do more with perceived racial status, and euphoria of racial superiority, which is one of the reasons some Whites still labor to keep racial discrimination (Feagin, 2006).

Avoidance and White flight are some of the antiquated prejudices that have viewed Blacks as inferior to the Whites in a social order. There are some Whites who are not conscious of racial ideological thinking, but often show aversion to those of other skin color sent to assist them (Feagin, 2006). Moreover, White workers from the slavery era to the present time have benefited in social and psychological dividends of Whiteness in terms of power, privilege, and resources (Feagin, 2006). The Whites continue to enjoy the psychological rewards of Whiteness gained during the period of legal segregation deriving from good education, better-paying jobs, and house ownership (Feagin, 2006). Contemporary economic exploitation is no longer that of enslavement of the Blacks but continues in job channeling, hostile work environment and discriminatory wages (Feagin, 2006). The past and present effects of racial discrimination are evident in the chasm between the average annual income and wealth for individual and families of the White on one hand, and that of Black on the other (Feagin, 2006).

Mostly, the stereotypes, bias, and prejudices many Whites hold against the Blacks are more than that of any other racialized group (Feagin, 2006). Undoubtedly African-Americans have known a singular and dire history of racism and various forms of alienation within the US (Yosso, 2005). Moreover, White-on-Black oppression is a discrete social reality that cannot be reduced to any other one but does often interact with other social realities that are used in oppressing people (Feagin, 2006). During slavery and the official segregation period, the Whites devised an array of tactics including

beatings, lynching, rapes, property destruction and a threat of violence to keep Black workers and their families in check (Feagin, 2006). “Indeed, white Americans invented the violent-and often gun oriented-traditions that are so distinctive of this society in the process of violently enslaving millions of African-Americans over more than two centuries of modern human history” (Feagin, 2006, p.271). Extreme family disruption was meted out for the Blacks as part of social control, financial gain and sexual exploitation (Feagin, 2006).

Critique of Liberalism

There has been an ongoing dialectics regarding racial disparity and its accompanying resistance by the Black Americans. “Over the centuries, the recurring white responses, legal and extralegal, to the many types of black resistance-slave runaways, rebellions, abolitionism, and recent civil rights movements are additional evidence of the centrality of white-on-black oppression...” (Feagin, 2006, p.13). It has been a constant struggle for the Blacks and other people of color against oppression and for social justice, democracy and equality (Feagin, 2006). Often, attempts at social justice and equity are rebuffed as a liberal agenda. Sometimes, the White elites and others have had to make some cosmetic changes and at other times substantial ones in order to retain the basic elements of racial hierarchy and White privileges (Feagin, 2006).

Racism is not only an ideological matrix but also social reality. Humans imbibe most of their color-coded insight, knowledge, and attitude from observation, media, and tradition and testing the reactions of parents, peers, and friends (Feagin, 2006). Hence, family, relatives, friends, and peers transmit racism from one generation to the next through socialization (Harro, 2013). Parents, relatives, teachers, and peers play vital roles

in the socialization of children and adolescent which eventually play a mediating factor in social stratification (Stanton-Salazar, 2011). Parents, relatives, and peers often transmit the odds and alienations that are against the Blacks and the need to build a roadblock of resistance to survive and thrive (Feagin, 2006). Socialization is not what we have full control over, however, we can challenge its aberration and work to overcome it as a lifelong commitment (Sensory & DeAngelo, 2012). Attempt to collectively forget by the Whites on the one hand, and collective remembering on the other hand by the Blacks of various aspects of racism are still a mark of racist U.S. society (Feagin, 2006).

Racism has Story and Counter-story

While the Blacks allude to the power, privileges, and resources, which the Whites enjoy, and the oppression they endure on a daily basis. The Whites have their own counter story. One of the principles of racism is its story and counter-story. Over time, family networks have been a mechanism for the reproduction, transmission, and perpetuation of White racial ideas and frames to the younger generation (Feagin, 2006; Harro, 2013). In their social circles, Whites pass along some misguided notion of how Whites as a group are the superior race in terms of their hard work, intelligence and moral standard (Feagin, 2006). “Storytelling is not valued so much for its truth content as its truth effects, its ability to affect our actions and orientation to the Other” (Leonardo, 2013, p.20).

Some Whites still view the Blacks with antiquated prejudice and negative stereotypes as unintelligent, lazy, immoral or criminal (Feagin, 2006). “Acknowledging problems of inequity often causes discomfort for those who have tolerated the status quo for too long. It stirs up political conflict... and it creates value dissonance among those who believe

that things are right the way they are” (Mintrop, 2016, p.1). Even when presented with up-to-date evidence that contradicts their stereotypes, biases, and prejudices against the Blacks, the Whites either ignore it or deny it (Feagin, 2006; Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). “Thus, systematic racism is far more than a matter of racial prejudice and individual bigotry. It is a material, social, and ideological reality that is well-embedded in major U.S. institutions” (Feagin, 2006, p.2). The mass media mostly controlled by the Whites have been another cultural institution that is responsible for the transmission of systemic racism from one generation to the next (Feagin, 2006; Harro, 2013).

Over the years, the Blacks have devised overt and covert means of combating oppression (Feagin, 2006). “As Du Bois suggests, resistance is a principal feature of racial oppression as it has developed over centuries of U.S history... withdrawal, confrontation, humor and sarcasm” (Feagin, 2006, p.143). They include but are not limited to “...slave revolts, fleeing oppression to other areas, work stoppages, boycotts, sit-ins, legal challenges, and nonviolent and violent civil disobedience” (Feagin, 2006, p.276). White-on-Black oppression remains a burden weighing on the mind and lives of all Americans (Feagin, 2006). The Blacks have suffered physical harm and psychological turbulence as individuals and as a group, which have resulted in a loss of material assets, and energy due to racial oppression and alienation (Feagin, 2006). The persistence of White-on-Black oppression has taken up much energy, and thoughts of the Blacks in devising strategies for combating them (Feagin, 2006). The Whites do not have to invest much energy in combating racism as the Blacks do; hence, they have much more energy reserved for other important endeavors (Feagin, 2006).

The U.S Constitution and other landmark documents that proclaim liberty and equality have done little or nothing to bring the same values to the people of color (Feagin, 2006). It was only by the vigorous protest of the Blacks and their White cronies such as in the abolitionist movement of the nineteenth centuries and civil rights marches of the mid-twentieth century that compelled the White elites to begin to make significant concessions for liberty and equality for all humans of every race and color (Feagin, 2006). Black extended families have played a crucial role in their survival of oppression and alienation (Feagin, 2006). The White often remembers the episodes of racism with some discomfort and regret due to its immorality and ugliness, with only a few of the Whites demonstrating more than a superficial feeling of their effects on Black lives (Feagin, 2006). Often these are the ones who join forces with the Blacks in protesting against racial discrimination and social injustice. Now as in the past, the Blacks continue to suffer not only economically but also in their overall health as individuals and as a community (Feagin, 2006).

Convergence of Interest

Meanwhile, some White elites in the universities, government, and media are calling for notable race-conscious action to cushion the effects of racial discrimination the Blacks have suffered across the ages (Feagin, 2006). “Even President Lyndon Johnson began to adopt occasionally the ‘we shall overcome’ language of the civil rights movement” (Feagin, 2006, p.228). Though systematic racism of today differs from that of the slavery era and racial discrimination, it is still the same in some fundamental elements such as racial hierarchy, discrimination, and White privileges (Feagin, 2006). Those who try to limit the issue of racism to a few individuals who discriminate against people of

Color versus the good ones who do not are only trying to create a binary of “we” versus “them” (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). Contemporary racism is beyond quite a few White bigots discriminating against other people, as it is embedded in social institutions that are hierarchical and discriminatory (Feagin, 2006).

Though official racial segregation is no longer legal, unofficial discrimination continues in the areas of education, employment, housing and so on, and white officials in government including justice system hardly take any aggressive action to stem the tide (Feagin, 2006). Even where there seem to be significant changes, as in anti-slavery and racial desegregation it was a matter of interest convergence (Feagin, 2006). “Thus, in the periods of U.S. history when some significant racial change does take place, the political and international interests of the white elite have generally been more important in generating change than their commitments to racial equality and justice” (Feagin, 2006, p.192).

Anti-racist Agenda

Race and racism are complex and multifaceted issues that resist any attempt at simplification. Reductionism is a risk worth taking in order to provide an assessment of the issues of race and racism (Leonardo, 2013). “On the other hand, a hermeneutics of empathy is an appraisal of perspective’s ability to transcend current limitations in racial understanding. Contrary to the ability of a hermeneutics of suspicion to expose the “true nature” of the reality behind the veil, a hermeneutic of empathy unfolds the project in front of it” (Leonardo, 2013, p.2). Racial realism is a worldview that tries to avoid the “negativity of ideology critique” as well as “positivity of utopian thinking” (Leonardo, 2013, p.18). To challenge racism aptly, different groups have different roles to play. The

dominant group has to overcome their individuality and look at their group dynamics and social process, while the targeted group has to challenge the projected, and skewed identity that robs them of their individuality (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). Examples of active antiracism include but are not limited to identification of internal racial dominance for the Whites, internalized racial oppression for the people of color and joining social justice advocacy groups (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012).

Engaging in critical justice literacy is a lifelong process that challenges our worldview, thought-process, and relations with people who have a different social racial identity from us (Sensory & DeAngelo, 2012). Critical justice literacy connects with such uncomfortable concepts such as oppression, privilege, and prejudice while challenging our simplistic solution to not to see color but treat everyone equally (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). Solorzano (1998) identifies and articulates five beliefs of Critical Race Theory that ought to inform theory, research, curriculum, pedagogy, policy and practice of education. They include (i) the inter-centricity of race and racism (ii) the challenge to dominant ideology (iii) the commitment to social justice (iv) the centrality of experiential knowledge and (v) the utilization of interdisciplinary approach. These principles and patterns can go a long way to bring about social justice and equity if properly utilized and applied to social good and reality of everyday existence.

2.3.3 Institutional Racism.

Racial discrimination permeates the economy, politics, housing, healthcare, policing, public accommodation and education (Feagin, 2006). Racism could be a normal occurrence of life in the U.S society (Taylor, 2009). Various aspects of racism can be exemplified through social, economic, political, and cultural structures and institutions

together with ideological beliefs and attitude (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). Each institution including economy, politics, family, religion, law, and education on closer examination still mirrors in many ways the basic reality of racial oppression (Feagin, 2006). It is only for the analytical purpose that one can separate the various aspects of racial oppression, but in reality, they work in tandem with one another (Feagin, 2009). Although which aspects of oppression that is reproduced may depend on time, place and White people who are involved, the overall intent is to keep racial operation active across generations (Feagin, 2006). Chesler and Crowfoot (1989) argue that our memories of racial injustice are kept alive by the contemporary differentials in opportunity and outcomes between the White and Black people.

Inter-school Segregation

Furthermore, public schools in the United States still practice segregation in two significant ways; one is inter-schools segregation and the other is intra-school segregation (Howe, 1997). In principle, the former which assigns students to schools based on their race has been abrogated by law in Brown versus Board of Education of Topeka (Howe, 1997). In practice, in the face of gentrification, as well as people of different races and social classes living in different neighborhoods, the reproduction of same class consciousness, is alive and active (Cookson, 2013).

Cookson (2013) states that this class consciousness is in turn internalized as collective memory. Cookson (2013) finds that five different high schools replicated discrete social class consciousness depending on what type of school and social class of students that attend them. For example, five different schools are known to represent some discrete classes namely upper class, upper-middle class, middle class, working

class, and underclass go through a different rite of passage in terms of pedagogy/curriculum, a definition of self and community orientations (Cookson, 2013). In the pedagogy/ curricular narrative, the orientation for the upper-class school is classical and concentrated, for the upper-middle-class, it is classical and enriched, for the middle class it is traditional and enriched, for the working class school it is traditional, minimal and vocational, and for the underclass it is simply basic and vocational (Cookson, 2013). The students defined themselves differently as the upper class sees themselves as leaders, upper-middle-class as professional, middle-class as the mainstream citizen, working class, as laborers while the underclass sees themselves as estranged from the mainstream (Cookson, 2013).

The community orientation of the upper-class high school is global and social elite; that of the upper-middle-class is global, corporate and business elite; for the middle class it is regional and white-collar; for the working class it is local trade and services, while for the underclass it is neighborhood marginal employment (Cookson, 2013). In view of this kind of stratification in opportunity, experience, and outcome, social mobility becomes even more difficult (Cookson, 2013). Hence, the idea that public school should become a great equalizer as proposed by Horace Mann is still a mirage (Cookson, 2013).

Intra-school Segregation

Further, the intra-school segregation that assigns students to different curricular opportunities within the same school based on test scores is active in schools today (Howe, 1997). “At one extreme is special education, at the other extreme is gifted education, and in the middle are various ‘tracks’ (e.g., college preparation, general, and vocational)” (Howe, 1997, p.79). The basic problem with segregating students into

different curricular opportunities based on academic ability is that Blacks and ethnic minorities are overrepresented in special education and underrepresented in gifted programs (Ferguson, 2004). Oakes (1985) finds that while the influence of tracking on average and high ability students remain inconclusive, it has detrimental effects on lower tracked students in terms of educational opportunities. “Among other inequalities, lower track students are taught by inferior teachers, exposed to inferior curriculum materials, and subject to inferior classroom environments. In such arrangements, then, and contrary to the best interests rationale, tracking does indeed trade-off opportunities” (Howe, 1997, p.80).

Moreover, the two main ways racial inequalities are reproduced today within schools are through institutional practices, and cultural representations of racial difference (Ferguson, 2004). These two ways operate in tacit and unofficial modes (Ferguson, 2004). Institutions replicate racial privileges and disparities in two forms namely recurring institutional inclusion and exclusion (Feagin, 2006). “In other words, institutions are racialized because they are embedded in a racialized predicament, which they reinforce and help reproduce” (Leonardo, 2013, p.21). The under-representation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs due to inadequate preparation by educators and poor funding are a form of exclusion. Ferguson (2004) observes that race is a ready-made filter for decoding events, informing social relationships, and grounding identities and identification in school.

Racism in Schools

Meanwhile, institutional racism, which is an extension of societal phenomenon continues to plague the education system as “...inequality of educational opportunity has

continued to be a problem in public schools and race-related problems persist” (Thompson, 2004, p.1). They find expression in the followings: (a) The deficit-deprivation (b) Structural inequality (c) Tracking (d) Cultural discontinuity (f) Fourth-grade failure syndrome, and (g) Acting white among other components (Thompson, 2004). “Currently, discriminatory sorting occurs through structures and practices that are so thoroughly institutionalized that they seem normal ... until we ask why racial inequities in outcomes are occurring so routinely and prevalently” (Dowd & Bensimon, 2015, pp.1-2).

Although some significant changes have taken place in the system, the basic elements of racism remain intact (Feagin, 2006). The major changes made so far amount to what Derrick Bell called a “convergence of interest” (Feagin, 2006). Hence, when substantial changes do occur in the social system of the U.S. the political and international interests of the White elite have been the driving force more than any sense of social justice and racial equality (Feagin, 2006). The working assumption these days is that racial discrimination in schools that led to busing had ended due to the civil right movement (Ferguson, 2004). Educators may question racism but not the status of race, for racism has to end but the race has a different purpose (Leonardo, 2013). “For color-blindness is often the performance of feigning indifference to race while enforcing its practice” (Leonardo, 2013, p.164).

While the Whites are optimistic about race they are not hopeful, whereas the Blacks are hopeful about race they are not optimistic (Leonardo, 2013). “These harsh realities are not pervaded by a sense of fatalism and doom; instead, an air of hopefulness...that it is possible to achieve high-quality education for all ethnically, racially, and culturally

diverse students” (Howard, 2010, p. xviii). It is because racism has been outlawed in the U.S that some argue that, “Officially, race existed in school as the baseline category for classifying and distributing kids throughout the system and into classrooms, but beyond that, the public consensus among adults was the distinctions of race were of no further significance” (Ferguson, 2004, p.17). Due to civil right movement and agitation of the 1960s and 1970s legal discrimination has ended, nevertheless, race continues as a major mode of distribution of power and privileges in the U.S society (Ferguson, 2006). “Contrary to the opinion of many, we are not living in a ‘post-racial’ society. Racial disparity between Whites and the people of Color exists in every institution across society” (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012, p.104).

Systematic racism has created posttraumatic stress syndrome for generations of Blacks (Feagin, 2006). “One critical insight here is the ‘twoness’ forced upon African-Americans, a white-imposed racial identity versus an internal self-striving to have an identity free of that racially imposed identity” (Feagin, 2006, p.148). Open expression of one’s identity during racial segregation was hazardous; as a result, the White never came to understand the authentic racial ideology of the Blacks (Feagin, 2006). Racism and its concomitant discrimination does not only harm the Blacks but also affects the Whites adversely. Fredrick Douglass experienced the damage systematic racism has done to the Whites as well, that is, the chain of wrongdoing across the centuries (Feagin, 2006).

2.3.4 Historical Barrier to Access and Opportunity

A retrospective cast into the past may help to understand the present situation, in so far as the present cast its shadow upon the future. A brief overview of the historical, political and socio-economic context of the Black people in the U.S will shed a light on

the remote reasons for the achievement gaps between White and Black students in general and the underrepresentation of Black students in dual enrollment in particular. The problem of educational inequality is deeply entrenched in the system of education in the United States (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). “Even with the slow but significant changes...this society has moved from slavery to legal segregation, to contemporary racism, strongly positive sincere fictions of white self, typically grounded in continuing assumptions of white superiority, have persisted across the society” (Feagin, 2006, p.46).

Among the woes suffered by the Blacks in the U.S apart from slavery, lynching, and disenfranchisement is segregation. When viewed from a theoretical perspective, legal segregation that ranged from the 1870s to the 1960s is another testament to the long-standing racism embedded in the country’s system (Feagin, 2006). Racial segregation was another stage in the ongoing process of oppression and alienation of Black people. “The ongoing structure of racial oppression during the legal segregation epoch was somewhat different in its details from that of slavery, but in fundamental ways, it was similar” (Feagin, 2006, p.149). Segregation manifested in all sorts of ways in the bus seats, residential areas, public bathrooms, and even schools (Feagin, 2006). This segregation derived its backing from Jim Crow law.

Institutional Segregation

The discrimination and marginalization of the Blacks started far back before the civil war, but segregation can be honed down from about 1880s and was fully entrenched by the first decades of the twentieth century (Feagin 2006). No wonder attempts at desegregation of schools have been heralded as good news, which can make a significant impact toward closing the achievement gaps between the White and Black school-age

children in education. However, attempts at desegregation have not always taken a linear progression, but have been marred by sundry twists and turns. The segregation of school based on color and race received approval in the Southern part of U.S. in the Supreme Court decision in the Plessy vs Ferguson Case in 1896, which mandated “separate but equal” access to public facilities, including schools for the Black and White (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). Sequel to Plessy, school segregations have legal backing in the South, and in the North, it was socially accepted (Cordes, & Miller, 2005).

Segregation gave the opportunity for the Blacks to receive a substandard education since their school districts were in many instances underfunded (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). Blacks were consigned to the schools that could not afford high-quality teachers and standard facilities that facilitated robust education (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). The Jim Crow system has already entrenched the North as a pattern when White southerners decided to use similar practice to subjugate the legally free Black southerners in the decades’ sequel to the Civil War (Feagin, 2006, p.127). Official segregation in the southern and border states and informal segregation in the northern part of the U.S for decades gave the Whites undue advantages over the Blacks (Feagin, 2006).

The Struggle for De-segregation

The beginning of the 20th Century was marked by constant struggles and legal battles to bring down segregation in the southern schools (How did school desegregation..., 2016). School segregation was commonplace in the South backed by laws and in the rest of the United States supported by custom or rules (How did school desegregation..., 2016). “Leading civil right lawyers like Thurgood Marshall and Charles Houston thought integrating southern schools would have more far-reaching social

benefits than desegregating any other public facility or institution” (How did school desegregation..., 2016, p.1). It was in the cloud of racial disparity in society and educational inequality that Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and Rosa Park fought for civil rights liberty in the 1950s and 1960s. In many respect, the fight to end segregated education and to have both White and Black children in one inclusive classroom was a giant stride in the civil right struggle (School desegregation and equal educational opportunity, 2001, para. 2).

Martin Luther sought for inclusion and urged for non-violent means to achieve it. However, Malcolm X urged for a violent approach and sought greater autonomy for the Blacks. Rosa Park resisted every form of marginalization, intimidation, and segregation. During the official segregation era, the Blacks championed more the values of equality and justice when compared to the Whites based on their religious view of freedom and justice (Feagin, 2006). Indeed, most Whites never lend credence to full racial equality and integration of major social institutions (Feagin, 2006). With the passage of time, more conservative White elites are jettisoning affirmative action which was initially put in place to cushion the cumulative effects of past social injustice and discrimination against the Blacks (Feagin, 2006).

Sequel to the civil rights movement and struggle, it took the Supreme Court up to 58 years to realize that segregation does no good to education. Hence, in the 1954 Supreme Court by common agreement overturned its decision and declared segregation in public schools unlawful in the Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). The Supreme Court declares: In the domain of public education the doctrine of ‘separate however equal education’ has no place because separate academic facilities are

inherently unequal (*Brown v Board of Education* in Howe, 1997). Social change came slowly and was not as thorough as Thurgood Marshall and his cohorts had expected as some Southern Whites put up a fight to stymie the gains made at desegregation (How did school desegregation..., 2016).

Given *Brown II*, which called in 1955, that desegregation should be carried out with “all deliberate speed” became part of the resistant movement (School desegregation and equal educational opportunity, 2001, para.5). The passage of Civil Rights Acts of 1964 coupled with a series of Supreme Court rulings in the late 60s and early 70s compelled public schools all over the country to desegregate and integrate (How did school desegregation..., 2016). Charles Clotfelter reports covering 1967 to 1972 indicate that the percentage of southern schools with 90 percent African-American dropped from 78 percent to 25 percent (How did school desegregation..., 2016). Schools integration took all sorts of forms. Some redrew the school zones; some paired all White and all Black schools while others bused students outside of their neighborhood to achieve an amalgamation of racial different students (How did school desegregation..., 2016).

Though desegregation has swept through most of the southern states, the Supreme Court ruling of 1973 had far more consequences in bringing desegregation to the rest of the country (How did school desegregation..., 2016). The Supreme Court ruling of 1973 in *Lau v. Nichols* found that a city school system’s failure to provide English language instruction to students of Chinese extraction amounted to unlawful discrimination (Civil Rights: U.S Supreme Court Decisions, 2013; School desegregation and equal educational opportunity, 2001). By 1980 the federal courts had mostly succeeded in eradicating the system of legalized segregation in southern schools (Cordes, & Miller, 2005).

Meanwhile, the federal government also investigated many northern cities and ordered the redistribution of school districts in an attempt to ensure equal education for men and women of all races and colors (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). “Clotfelter shows that from 1968 to 1976, the percentage of black students attending racially isolated schools in the United States dropped significantly, from 64-36 percentage” (How did school desegregation..., 2016, p.1).

However, in the face of many court rulings and aggressive tackling of the problem by the federal government, many school districts did not desegregate (How did school desegregation..., 2016). In 1957, for example, Orval Faubus the then Governor of Arkansas ordered his state national guard to stultify the admission of nine Black students to Little Rock’s Central High School (School desegregation and equal educational opportunity, 2001). The almost a month standoff with the federal government ended when President Eisenhower sent soldiers to protect Black students (School desegregation and equal educational opportunity, 2001).

White flight continues to be an obstacle to desegregation. “The racial balance targeted by the Acadia desegregation program has never been attained because of the “white flight” from the public schools that followed the implementation of the desegregated plan in 1968” (Ferguson, 2004, p.5). Many of the White children who attended private elementary school eventually return to Acadia high school where there is segregation because of an elongated tracking system (Ferguson, 2004). In 1974 a landmark decision of Supreme Court ruling barred cities from achieving racial balance in schools by busing children from adjoining suburbs if it involves crossing district lines

(How did school desegregation..., 2016). The decision brought to halt significant attempts to desegregate in many urban areas (How did school desegregation..., 2016).

It looked as if the gains made in the 70s and 80s to desegregate took a downward turn following some court decisions that barred school districts from voluntary desegregation endeavors (How did school desegregation..., 2016). This sparked a significant controversy between civil rights advocates who argued that it is necessary since other efforts have failed. Orfield was quick to point out the schools that have abandoned race-conscious effort at desegregation have witnessed a new wave of re-segregation, and his research found that schools that are predominantly Black and Hispanic are where many children come from low-income families (How did school desegregation..., 2016). Mullins (2013) indicates that African-American and Latino students are less likely to attend racially and ethnically diverse schools today than any other time in the last four decade. It is segregation by ethnicity, race and socioeconomic status and for the Latinos by language too (Mullins, 2013).

Before the 20th century, the state's education system hinged substantially on local school districts as the local taxes constituted more than half of school funding (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). "In 1940s states took more control by consolidating school districts and implementing a more common procedure" (Cordes, & Miller, 2005, p.4-5). In time past, public education was the primary responsibility of the state government, not that of the federal government (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). The federal government has always provided the enabling environment and safe condition while making a minimal contribution to education (Cordes, & Miller, 2005).

In 1983, the federal commission on education came up with a report, *A Nation at Risk*, together with statistics that suggest that other industrialized nations are performing better in the international academic test than the U.S (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). This report alerted the nation and made the federal government become more involved in the educational system with reforms aimed at strengthening the system (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). One of the notable ones is, *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* passed during the presidency of George W. Bush in 2002 (Cordes, & Miller, 2005).

The reform law tries to improve the academic achievement of all students by instituting that school performs at the proficient level on state standardized tests (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). The law institutes that students in grade three to eight be tested annually in Math and Reading (Cordes, & Miller, 2005), and beginning 2007 testing in Science as well (Armstrong, 2006). The school that failed to perform up to the required standard should allow students to transfer to better-performing schools (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). If a school refused to improve after a repeated warning, the government can take it over (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). By 2006, all teachers must have been qualified in the subject area of their instruction (Cordes, & Miller, 2005). Further, NCLB made a push towards “scientifically proven” teaching methods, as well as reliance on high-stakes testing to evidence student improvement” (Aldridge & Goldman, 2007, p.113).

A major challenge to NCLB 2001 is that while that reform effort took the first step on calling educators to maintain high expectation for all students, it failed in the crucial next step of holding policymakers accountable for providing the opportunity and resources that make for universal students’ success (Welner & Carter, 2013). Test-scores and their attendant achievement gap will not go away until policies that tackle the

conditions and opportunities that inhibit progress are properly formulated and implemented (Welner & Carter, 2013). It is my claim that the underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs (Carter, 2006; Zinth 2014), contributes to their lack of college and career readiness.

Education as presently structured tilts toward keeping and maintaining the status quo and filling the labor market (McLaren, 2007). The system favors Whites and high-income families and alienates Black and low-income families (McLaren, 2007). “Racial inequality and its vestiges in education are products of historical events...slavery, cultural and physical genocide, and labor exploitation. These injuries would have been enough, but their reach and influence into daily practices should not be underestimated” (Leonardo, 2013, p.15). In general, the exploited and oppressed lose significant control over important aspects of their lives including their labor, land, relationships, and ability to develop their full potentials (Feagin, 2006).

The implication is that the upper and the middle-class families are more aligned to the system while the poor ones are estranged (McLaren, 2007). People of color and ethnic minorities are more likely to be low-income earners compared to their White counterparts (Desilver, 2013; Gonzalez, 2005). Social networking as a vital aspect of social capital plays an essential role in the propagation of racism across generations (Feagin, 2006). Social institutions provide fertile ground for the perpetuation of power and privileges of the White race over the people of color in America (Feagin, 2006). “Once members of a group are racially privileged, as Whites were from the extensive exploitation of African Americans in slavery and legal segregation, they typically pass on that privilege in the form of money-capital, social capital, and/or cultural capital to their

descendants, over one generation after another" (Feagin, 2006, p.269-270). Most of the major social institutions, norms, idiosyncrasies, and culture are White generated, construed and imposed (Feagin, 2006). Now, one turns over to Cultural Capital Theory and Social Capital Theory.

2.3.5 Cultural Capital Theory

Cultural Capital Theory and Social Capital Theory may be pertinent in explaining the social phenomena of underrepresentation of Black and low-income student in dual enrollment, which contributes to their lack of college and career readiness and success. Cultural deficit theorist claims that the culture of the people of color is non-existent or abnormal, language deficit, home environment pathological and genetics matter (Howard, 2010). There is a need to acknowledge the cultural richness of the people of color.

Critical Race Theory has a commitment to develop schools that celebrate the multiple strengths of communities of color in order to serve the large purpose of social justice, and equity (Yosso, 2005). However, for cultural difference theorist, culture is rich, unique and complex; language is an asset, home environment has capital while environment matters (Howard, 2010). Hence, for the cultural deficit theorist, the solution is to transform the child while for cultural difference theorist it is to transform the school (Howard, 2010).

Furthermore, Howard (2010) outlines the distinctions between sympathetic teachers and empathic teachers. While sympathetic teacher settles for low expectations of students due to race, poverty, or language while seeing limitations, and deficit in students; an empathic teacher holds students accountable despite the constraints of their circumstances due to promises, possibilities, and assets in students (Howard, 2010). While sympathetic

teacher has narrow, limited teaching repertoire as a result of perceived student capacity, and is paralyzed by problems, empathic teacher develops critical and complex teaching practices to engage students as an active problem solver (Howard, 2010). Sympathetic teacher views teaching as “teacher-dominated practice”, while placing little or no value on student perspective or voice, while empathic teacher sees learning as a reciprocal process between teacher and student while paying attention to students’ experiences, prior knowledge and culture (Howard, 2010, p.49). Empathic teachers do not make use of dumping system of education, instead they engage the student in the construction of knowledge.

Cultural imperialism is a serious problem facing education in the United States. Violence is a variety of oppression related to attitudes and practices that cultural imperialism approves (Howe, 1997). It is part of the comprehensive form of systematic racism as Whites have tried to impose their cultures, and values on the people of color in the United States (Feagin, 2006). The Whites have imposed the Eurocentric culture inherited from their forebears as the norm of the society (Feagin, 2006). For example, the conformity of Black Americans and other Americans of color to the old Anglo-Saxon and the White-middle-class form of English language as the standard (Feagin, 2006).

Moreover, the school system tilts to the interests, skills, and attitudes of the middle class and the upper-class children (McLaren, 2007). The cultural capital in use at school system favors the average White students when compared to the Black ones (Howard, 2010). This is because the curriculum and the content of studies have declivity toward the Western perception of reality and worldview, which tend to favor Euro-Americans to the disadvantage of Indians, Mexicans, Africans, Vietnamese, Puerto-Rican, Chinese, and

Japanese of non-Western aborigines (Anderson, 1988; Rendon, 1994). The Western world-view emphasizes individual competition/achievement, mastery, and controls of nature, adherence to a rigid time schedule, nuclear family, dualistic thinking, and distinction of religion from other aspects of culture, limited affective expression, feeling of superior worldview, and task-oriented (Anderson, 1988).

On the other hand, non-Western worldview emphasizes group cooperation/achievement, value harmony with nature, the relativity of time, extended family system, holistic thinking, permeation of religion with culture, acceptance of affective expression, acceptance of the worldview of other cultures and social orientation (Anderson, 1988). Further, the cognitive styles of the Westerners are mainly field-independent, analytical, and non-affective while that of the non-Westerners are mainly field-dependent, relational/holistic and affectionate (Anderson, 1988).

The Westerner tends to perceive elements as discrete from their background, do best on analytic tasks, learn material that is inanimate and impersonal more easily; and performance not greatly affected by the opinions of others, while style matches up with most school environment (Anderson, 1988). While the non-Western cognitive style perceives elements as a part of a total picture, do best on verbal tasks, learns materials which has a human social content and which is characterized by fantasy and humor; while having performance influenced by authorizing figures expression of confidence or doubt (Anderson, 1988). While the former styles are in alignment with, the latter styles are in conflict with traditional school environment (Anderson, 1988).

Ferguson (2004) made a distinction between the hidden curriculum and the official curriculum. Although the official curriculum may appear to be objective, the hidden one

favors the average White person's culture, norm, and idiosyncrasy (Anderson, 1988). While the White populations do better, students of color are at risk of not doing well since the current academic curriculum and status quo do not favor them. The culture and social values espoused by the school system are not in alignment with that of the students of color. "The epistemological origin of school knowledge is heavily steeped in Eurocentric worldview and ideology that largely omit the experiences, histories, contributions, and cultures of people of color, the poor, and women" (Howard, 2010, p.71). Success in school for many economically disadvantaged children is a kind of forced cultural suicide as well as racial suicide for ethnic minorities (McLaren, 2007). "My work with female students... confirmed many of the findings of critical educational theorists who described ... "hidden curriculum" of schooling as an attempt to reproduce the values, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to maintain our society's present class-based division of labor..." (McLaren, 2007, p.175).

This cultural capital of the Caucasians is projected everywhere in the school curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Howard, 2010). Similarly, though racism and segregation have been officially abrogated, other forms of subjugation, marginalization, and alienation continue to go on covertly in hidden curriculum and the teachers have leeway in interpreting, perceiving and controlling the emotions and attitudes of the school-age children (Ferguson, 2004). The Black students and their parents have a series of White folkways to which they must conform as they enter educational institutions (Feagin, 2006). Even at home where they seem to be in control of their world, the White controlled mass media, friends, and family often infiltrate the environment with learned White cultures repeatedly (Feagin, 2006). For the people of color, there is no escape from

whiteness in this racist society (Feagin, 2006). To offer ‘real’ instead of ‘bare’ opportunities, academic programs, curricula, and systems must be crafted with an awareness of the meaning students ascribe to their interactions with the institutions (Dowd & Bensimon, 2015, p.13).

However, it is important to point out that Black students and students from low-income backgrounds are not culturally deficient but culturally different. Blacks and low-income students are endowed with some funds of knowledge, skills, and capacity that are hitherto unrecognized, unacknowledged and uncelebrated in the school system (Yosso, 2005). They are endowed with community cultural wealth including aspirational, linguistic, resistant, navigational, familial and social capital that has remained unsung and needs to be celebrated (Yosso, 2005). Yet, Black students and their families have social and cultural values which are original to their soul and African heritage.

2.3.6 Aboriginal African Social Values and Cultural Relevant Pedagogy

A retrospective cast on the aboriginal African sociocultural values will help shed light on the covert inspiration of Black students. In other words, some of the remnants of these cultural values and identity are still what propel Black student’s soul today amid significant cultural discontinuity. There is a need to consider African aboriginal values and culture in order to create parity in the US educational system. These values are common to all Africans in general, and to the Igbos in particular.

They are as follows: (a) a deep sense of Religion and the Sacred, (b) Respect for life, (c) Respect for elders and Legitimately Constituted authority. Others are (d) an Extended family system, (e) Sense of communalism and (f) Hospitality.

A deep sense of Religion and the Sacred

First, the Africans have a deep sense of religion and a sense of the sacred. In fact, to live for the Africans is to live in the cosmic unity of the religious world. In addition to the notion of a Creator-God (Chukwu onye-okike) who is transcendent nay immanent in the world. Typically, the strong belief that the world is full of divinities, spirits, deities, demons and their human allies in the form of witches and wizards characterize the African world-view. Thus for the Igbos, there is no dichotomy between the sacred and the secular, the natural and the preternatural, because the spiritual interpenetrates this physical universe. This is a unitary vision of reality. The divinities are regarded as intermediaries between God and humans. Imasogie, (1986) submits that God created the divinities to assist him in the theocratic government of the world, and assigns each of the divinities a specific department of nature over which he had authority, subject only to the veto power of God. This is the rationale for attributing various divinities as being in charge of various things and aspect of nature such as god of the sun, god of thunder, god of the beauty, goddess of the earth etc. (Imasogie, 1986).

The pronounced place given to the divinities in the religious scheme of things parallels the structuring of the socio-political setup, which requires that a King is shrouded in mystery by surrounding himself with intermediaries through whom he administers his domain (Imasogie, 1986). Often, the reverence of the sacred extends to the evil forest, iroko trees, grooves and so on. This made the traditional Igbo person less adventurous when compared to their European counterpart who is highly exploitative and adventurous. This exploitative nature has led to the discovery and invention of so many

things for the Euro-American world in science and technology. However, it has led to environmental degradation and ecological hazard too.

What is important here is not the polytheistic view of God by ancestral African worldview which does not conform to Christian monotheism, but the sense of the sacred which the indigenous Africans exhibit. Moreover, this deep sense of sacred and religion has helped the Africans to embrace Christianity in big numbers, transferring their allegiance from ancestral religion to Christian one. The Igbos of Southeast Nigeria, for example, have a high sense of reverence for the sacral persons and holds the sacred institutions in high esteem. They have great regard for the places of worship such as the church, chapel, basilica, shrines of the saints and have a great devotion to the things of God. With the spirit of Christian charity inspired by a deep sense of religion, the Igbos have contributed in gigantic terms in building churches, hospitals, schools from nursery to tertiary institutions while engaging in other humanitarian works.

Respect for Life

Second, in general, Africans have great respect for life and value the sacredness of life. This is one of the Igbos' practices and values which Christianity espouses and defends (Ojene, 1993). The community has no tolerance for those who commit murder. "Anyone who kills a person from his own people is excommunicated from the land to appease the gods" (Ojene 1993, p.11). Murder is an egregious crime. The Igbos can go places and spend a whole fortune in seeking a solution to a sickness, ailment or misfortune (Ojene, 1993). They are prone to performing rites, ceremonies, and an incantation that enhance life. The Ibos have some taboos surrounding sexuality showing how they reverence human reproduction and source of life (Ojene, 1993). The respect

Igbos have for human life and dignity is further manifested in the choice of names. For example, “Ndubuisi-Life is first; Ndukaku-Life is superior to wealth...Ndukanma-Life is best things on earth” (Ojene, 1993, p.11) manifest the inestimable value of human life. They are prepared to go to a great extent including a war in defense of their lives and that of others (Ojene, 1993).

Respect for Elders and Legitimately Constituted Authority

Third, in a materialistic age, it is common to judge people by their productive capacity (Ojene, 1993). In contrast, traditional Igbo society regards old age as the greatest gift from God and there is respect for elders and legitimately constituted authorities. The greatest prayer in the lips of an average Igbo person is long life; others are good health and prosperity. Old people are regarded as the repository of communal wisdom and are greatly revered and even consulted as oracles (Ojene, 1993). The young ones hardly address their seniors by their personal names instead, they address them with a generic name such as "dede" for “males” or "dada" for “females” prefixing their names, an act that smears of respect and honor. Moreover, old people finding of facts in conflict resolution, their wealth of expertise which is given in advisement, their oral proof on historical events and their prayers on behalf of the entire family or community make them the greatest gifts to a family (Ojene, 1993). Long after they have gone from this planetary existence, the aged who led good lives are venerated as ancestors and progenitors.

Grandfathers and grandmothers would always gather their children and grandchildren by the fireside before the bedtime to tell them stories about the origin of things, places, events using fairytales, proverbs, myths, rhythms, that are interesting, educative, and exhorting in good behavior, virtue, and morals. Though these forms of

education are generally referred to as informal, it opens an early window of opportunities for the young, sharpens long term as well as short-term memories. These short stories and fairy tales with moral lessons served as early exposure to positive behavior interventions in anger management, conflict resolutions, problem-solving, dialogue, and leadership skills.

Extended Family System

Fourth, in Igbo-African traditional society to live is to live with others (Ojene, 1993). In other words, "I am because we are". The network of human relationships such as cousin, uncles, nephews, aunts, in-laws, and one's own direct children all belong to a family (Ojene, 1993). This is an extended family system in practice. In human relationships, the blood is thicker than water. It is so strong that everybody who can be identified with a particular clan is regarded as a "brother" or a "sister" to other members of the clan and must be treated accordingly. For this reason, hardly any Igbo dialect distinguishes between the term "brother" and "cousin" as we have in the English language. The only word that identifies a consanguine relation stretching many generations is "brother" if one is a man or "sister," if the person is a woman. A child born to any member of this large and unstructured circle of interrelatedness belongs to the whole family; hence, such names as Nworah (the child of all), Obiorah (the heart of all) and so on were common (Ojene, 1993). In an extended family structure, all assets and liabilities of this amorphous string of interconnectedness are happily shared (Ojene, 1993). Such names as Nwanneka (kinship is great) Nwanne-bu-ife (kinship is valuable), Ife-aka-Nwanne (Nothing is greater than kinship) stress the importance of this relationship (Ojene, 1993).

Similarly, another noble practice that makes the Igbos their neighbor's keepers is the Umunna (kindred) system. The above Umunna system is applicable to Africans in general and Igbos in particular (Ojene, 1993). "In Umunna System, a whole generation of direct relations even up to the fifth and sixth generations under the same family tree down to the last person born therein form very closely knit structure stronger than any force in the society" (Ojene, 1993, p.7). Umunna System is very effective for the caring project (Ojene, 1993). "So powerful is this practice that even if the whole town is against you but Umunna stands with you, then there is little to worry about" (Ojene, 1993, p.7). Caring for the sick, the poor, the aged, sheltering the homeless, and paying for the dowry of the indigent members are some of the caring projects of the system (Ojene, 1993). Other duties are enforcing discipline, conflict resolution, and coming to the defense of members (Ojene, 1993). However, the problem with this practice is that it is sectarian in nature and seems to exclude others.

Deep Sense of Communalism

Fifth, indigenous African society is person-oriented with a deep sense of communalism. People are their brother's keepers (Ojene, 1993). "One person would not be in want while another wallows in affluence" (Ojene, 1993, p.12). Africans have a sense of communalism that reserves some of the precious resources such as land, economic trees, spring water for communal use (Ojene, 1993). We regard our living together not as a product of chance giving room for endless competition but an act of God affording us the opportunity to confront a common problem in unison (Biko, 1978).

Sense of Hospitality

Sixth, the Igbos have a deep sense of hospitality. They are not in the business of molesting a stranger (Onye-obia). They take good care of their visitors and try to make them as comfortable as possible. Igbos have a symbolic way of welcoming visitors. These are in the form of presentation of Kola nuts, traditional gin, cohesion chalk, and alligator pepper. They will always make sure that their visitors are well entertained before they can think of taking things for themselves. In African culture and tradition, it will be a misnomer to eat food items in front of others without sharing it with them or at least inviting them to partake in the same (Okafor, 1974). These African social values of the extended family system, a deep sense of communalism and hospitality to strangers have defining influences on one's educational pursuits. From these indigenous social values and cultures, it is clear that Black people in the US are in no way culturally deficient, but rather culturally different.

The problem is that the school system has not taken the original African social and cultural values into consideration or have treated them with a discount. As the nation's ethnic diversity increases, schools must develop ways to respond creatively to produce multicultural environments that accommodate diverse student backgrounds and cultural sensitivities. The challenge of the twenty-first century is making every school a place of real right to learn for all students of every community (Aldridge & Goldman., 2007). Hence, there is a great need to incorporate the aboriginal African socio-cultural values in the hidden curriculum of studies in order to capture the Black student soul. This is the essence of cultural pedagogical practices. The guiding principle should be "e pluribus

unum- out of many, one” (Banks, Cookson, Gay, Hawley, Irvine, Nieto, Schofield, & Stephan, 2007, p.185). This is not a call for uniformity but unity in diversity.

Cultural Relevant Pedagogy

Taylor (1995) rejects that only traditional Western canon with its hidden curriculum has the sole monopoly of human erudition and points out that other diverse cultures have merits worth exploring. It is unfair to the ethnic minorities that the entire substratum of education is founded solely on Western canon. Yet, the ethnic minorities are expected to conform to this canon by acting white. Considering where the opportunity for schooling and success exists, taking advantage of them can come at a greater opportunity cost of one’s personal identity and culture for ethnic minorities than to the privileged group (Howe, 1997). So, culturally responsible pedagogy is necessary to avoid cultural oppression, hegemony, and imperialism which the ethnic minority students are faced with every day in school. “Schooling has a responsibility to help eliminate each of these forms of oppression. Cultural imperialism, however, is probably the most far-reaching, and along with violence, the form most directly under the control of schools” (Howe, 1997, p.70).

This will reduce the issue of acting white, which is a prevalent belief the in order to be credible and relevant one’s behavior, attitude and identity must be defined by that of the dominant group (Howe, 1997). “Inclusion is thus a necessary condition for fostering equality of educational opportunity under its participatory interpretation” (Howe, 1997, p.89). Howe (1997) agrees with melting point theorists that there is a need for universal educational ideals in public schools in order to avert tower of Babel; however, it should be open to renegotiation in accordance with the postmodernist view of multiculturalism.

Au (2011) advocates hybrid of cultures and world-views not duplication with regard to culturally responsive pedagogy. It is a hybrid of cultures rather than a multiplicity of cultures after all amid cultural diversities may be just two essential value systems not a multiplicity of value systems.

Howard (2010) asserts that the provision of optimal educational access, experience, and outcomes to underserved and marginalized students is “a moral imperative” (Howard, 2010, p.xxi). “Culturally responsive pedagogy seeks to offer the same types of educational opportunities, personal enhancements, school structures, and experiences in schools that have been in place for dominant groups since the establishment of U.S. public schools” (Howard, 2010, p.71). Hence, repositioning practitioners with theoretical knowledge and skills to meet the challenges of underserved students can be an appropriate response to macro-cultural and structural poverty beyond the walls of the classroom (Howard, 2010). Antiracism and cultural responsive engagement with underserved students are a long-term venture that requires learning, relearning, self-reflection, self-critique and change in educational infrastructural systems (Howard, 2010). Students are evolving complex beings with intricate heritage, experience, need and possibilities which teachers should see as opportunities (Howard, 2010). Learning about race, racism, and culture should be a constant process of “inquiry, discovery, problem-solving, deconstruction, and transformation” (Howard, 2010, p.xx).

Cultural responsible practice is predicated on the framework that students, their families, and communities have ample cultural wealth, knowledge, experience and skills that can be explored to enrich curriculum, content, assessment to nurture students’ well-being and academic success (Howard, 2010). Besides optimal academic performance,

culturally responsive teaching helps to develop students' social justice consciousness in addressing societal inequity and in the reformation of society (Howard, 2010). The ability of a teacher to empathize with all students is not limited by one's race but rooted in the willingness and ability to tap into diverse cultures, jettison deficit view of any group of students and strive to make all student meet high academic success (Howard, 2010). It is open to diverse perspectives on any issue which may not be mainstream but is equally valued by teachers as well as students (Howard, 2010). "Cultural responsive teaching asks students to question, deconstruct, and then reconstruct knowledge" (Howard, 2010, p.76).

Cultural engagement programs can be improved by understudying policies and programs that have improved the success of underserved student populations (Howard, 2010). Cultural democracy is imperative in order to create an enabling environment for students of every race and color to attain their full potentials (Howard, 2010). There is a need for educators to develop cultural competence and racial awareness (Howard, 2010). "Perhaps the most important aspect of developing cultural competence, critical reflection... and of dismantling privilege, is to recognize that neutrality is equivalent to acting against equity, fairness, and justice in the classroom" (Howard, 2010, p.119). Hope is an asset that helps one grasp a reality that is not seen but is believed to be attainable (Howard, 2010). "Hope offers a response to the anxiety, stress, pain, suffering, misery, anger, and angst that seem to have become staples in urban, rural, and suburban communities across the nation" (p.150).

Research and theory on culturally responsive pedagogy are based on five key principles. They are as follows: The removal of deficit-based perspective, Euro-centric

ideology as sole normative, and challenge to injustice and inequity (Howard, 2010). Others are ethics of care that considers the totality of the wellbeing of students, and recognition of cultural complexity and the students' perspectives based on their personal culture (Howard, 2010). Besides cultural capital theory, social capital is another issue that is creating disparity in educational experiences and outcomes for school-age children.

2.3.7 Social Capital Theory

The social capital theory is such an elusive concept that scholars have viewed it from different perspectives, each according to one's own frame of mind. Social capital is the sum total of would be or actual resources which are connected to a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships and symbiotic acquaintances (Bourdieu, 1986). Though the concept of social capital may appear elusive, it consists of resources and key forms of institutional support embedded in complicated and frequently class-conscious structures found in formal sophisticated organization and establishments (e.g., schools, universities, firms, corporations) (Stanton-Salazar, 2011, p.1083). The social capital theory has to do with trusting relationship marked with mutual respect, dignity, care, and safety. The greater the ability of an adolescent to exercise the white middle-class male-centric discourse, that is acting white, the more likely the individual will receive high academic expectation, good grades, and academic support and encouragement that are keys to success from educators (Stanton-Salazar, 2011). Hence, to a great degree, the social and academic differentiation observable in high school years is attributable to self-adequacy that derives from the perception of educators and one's peers (Stanton-Salazar, 2011).

The social capital frameworks deal with how adolescents gain vital resources through institutional agents that populate their socio-cultural world (Stanton-Salazar, 2011).

Adolescents require for their physical developmental and academic success resourceful assets such as mentors, pro-academic peers, and institutional agents as well as purposeful activities to reach their full maturity (Stanton-Salazar 2011). The ability of significant others to transmute from “institutional agents” to “empowerment agents” for the low-status youth is consequent upon the structure, resourcefulness, and effectiveness of their own social networking (Stanton-Salazar 2011, p.1068). The empowerment of underserved youth is expected to have ripple effects in their lives, families, communities, and society at large, given their critical consciousness (Stanton-Salazar 2011).

Each individual is born into already existing social ties that will shape the economic, social and cultural assets of the person (Feagin, 2006). The impact of socio-economic factors such as language barrier, family variables and income on educational outcomes cannot be overemphasized (McLaren, 2007). Educational inequalities and intergenerational economic differentiation are exceedingly correlated with color, ethnicity, linguistic and social class status (Welner & Carter, 2013). Hence, research has shown that one of the greatest predictors of academic success is socio-economic status (McLaren, 2007). Although, there is a correlation between socio-economic status and academic success they are not determined since other variables come into play such as early childhood education, high literate parents, academic coaching, and wholesome physical and social environment (Welner & Carter, 2013).

Some teachers still harbor a low expectation of Black and low-income students (Gorki, 2013). Hence, it is common to see Black and low-income students tracked out of

honored programs, but populated in the special education programs (Ferguson, 2004). Often, Black students and low in-income students are treated with disrespect (Ferguson, 2004). This hostile and unwholesome social relation and attitude toward the Black and low-income students worsen their ability to perform well in school. Ferguson (2004) highlights both covert and overt social injustice in public schools. Injustices take the forms of implicit racism, racial profiling, micro-aggression, and stereotypical treatment (Ferguson, 2004). It was not a surprise to anyone that most of those who were at risk of academic failure and dropping out of the school were mainly African male students (Ferguson, 2004). It is clear that just as students are tracked into potential doctors, scientists, engineers, word processors, and fast-food workers, there were also tracks for some children, especially Black male students that led to prison (Ferguson, 2004). Social institutions have the capacity to create, shape and regulate social goals (Ferguson 2004). Though Black boys accounted for about one-quarter of the entire student body at Rosa Parks, they constitute almost half the number of students sent to the Punishing Room for a major and minor infraction in 1991-92 (Ferguson, 2004).

Institutional agents by virtue of their position possess a high degree of cultural, human and social capital (Stanton-Salazar 2011). They are active when they mediate and transmit on behalf of adolescents' resources, supports, privileges, and services (Stanton-Salazar 2011). "The point to be made here is that learning multiple discourses and participating in distinct, non-familial sociocultural worlds, in preparation for adulthood, requires active engagement with various agents within each of these worlds" (Stanton-Salazar 2011, p.1069). The non-parental supports that adolescents receive contribute substantially to their social and academic success include the cultural transmission of

distinct discourses, access to a key fund of knowledge, academic support, and advisement (Stanton-Salazar, 2011). The supports also bring about steering types of modeling and coaching design to push effective communication and relatively promote efficient help-seeking together with a reciprocal exchange with totally different adult and peer networks (Stanton-Salazar 2011, p.1070). Low-status youth often find ways to empower themselves by tapping on the support and resources of well-positioned institutional agents (Stanton-Salazar 2011). Teachers in their multi-stranded relationships with students can informally assume co-parent, advocate, counselor, social worker, knowledge agent and mentor (Stanton-Salazar 2011).

Teachers who are guided by a sense of social justice can make available to low-status students the high valued resources which would otherwise not be available to them such as college preparative curriculum, data concerning faculty admission needs and financial assistance (Stanton-Salazar 2011). Hence, we can begin to envision a situation whereby individuals and institutions begin to provide resources and support to low-status students who are traditionally excluded by the social structure from these goods such as “...access to high-quality schools, recruitment into academic enrichment courses and programs” (Stanton-Salazar 2011, p.1086). The social support system should be oriented toward the empowerment of low-status students and youth (Stanton-Salazar 2011).

Institutional agents are able to offer working class and ethnic minority students the support and the resources they need to thrive within the atmosphere of trust, solidarity and meaningful context (Stanton-Salazar 2011). “Agents in this arrangement are limited by their condition, which makes it difficult to imagine acting independently from it” (Leonardo, 2013, p.21). Institutions must not send the mixed signal of maintaining the

status quo as the middle class and upper-class students are already aligned with receiving institutional support and resources from institutional agents (Stanton-Salazar, 2011).

Working class and ethnic minority youths depend on institutional agents for support and resources which they are not likely to receive from any other avenue (Stanton-Salazar, 2011). Care must be taken lest personal and bureaucratic agendas will constitute an obstacle to institutional agents in a position to help working class and ethnic minority students (Stanton-Salazar 2011, p.1088).

In a society as well as student serving institutions, one finds institutional agents who are ready to help working class and ethnic minority students (Stanton-Salazar 2011). According to Stanton-Salazar (2011) the motivational features of institutional agents are as follows: (a) knowledge of structural and institutional forces against the success of underserved students (e.g., low financial resources, lack of recruitment, and retention efforts); (b) awareness that the success of low-status students is dependent on customized institutional support (p.1089). More incentives are (c) unwillingness to keep the business as usual (e.g., advocating only for students in gifted programs) (d) identification as social justice advocates, and (e) their willingness to be identified by school personnel as advocating for low-status students (Stanton Salazar, 2011, p.1089). Through critical consciousness, the empowerment agents refuse to reproduce structural injustice but rather as moral agents to empower the low-status youth to change their world (Stanton-Salazar 2011).

It is possible to get some institutional agents whose motivation may not be “changing the world” but simply “widening the pipeline” (Stanton-Salazar 2011, p.1089). The transformation of consciousness basically includes a sociological mindset that is a critical

consciousness about social structures, institutional policies, and practice, and conditions that inhibit their efforts to achieve their target (e.g., a successful transition from high school to college) (Stanton-Salazar 2011, p.1091). The ability of institutional agents to assist low-status students to achieve their desired goals is dependent on the agents' personal, institutional and interpersonal resources (Stanton-Salazar 2011). Institutional agents are able to expand their capacity to support underserved students when they are able to take up a multiplicity of roles such as “advocate, knowledge agent, bridge agent and institutional broker” (Stanton-Salazar 2011, p.1079). The more social network an institutional agent has the more one will be able to act on behalf of the underserved students to achieve their goals not only through one's network alone but that of others too (Stanton-Salazar 2011). Next, let us examine the validation theory.

2.3.8 Validation Theory

Validation theory with its social justice twist has become a viable option to theorize how underserved students can meet with success in their college education (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). The theory holds the key to significant learning and teaching and opens up liberating learning environment where students are affirmed rather than vilified (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). Rendon (1994) adopted the concept of validation and theorized its implications for student development, teaching and learning with regard to the low-status students, underserved students, and students who have been made to doubt their ability to succeed in college. This theory finds favor with scholarly practitioners who feel that it speaks to the issue of underserved students and adult students returning for college after staying away for a while (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). The unsubstantiated assumption that all students should be able to function on their own favors affluent students who are

already endowed with significant financial, social and academic capital (Rendon & Munoz, 2011).

Rendon (1994) argues that many ethnic minority students experience invalidation and oppression in the course of their studies. She asserts that though there are some students who are able to overcome being put down, many others need external validation from administrators, faculty, staff, parents, and friends in order to recover their innate confidence, self-worth, liberation, potentiality, and self-adequacy to success. “Students lacking these forms of capital will ultimately want to function on their own, but studies employing validation theory demonstrate that there is a class of students that do initially benefit from non-patronizing, caring, external authorities who can provide affirmation and support” (Rendon & Munoz, 2011, p.27). First, the validation element puts the onus on the institutional agents such as administrators, teachers, advisers, counselors, coaches, lab assistants to reach out to the students instead of waiting for students to come to them (Rendon, 1994). Non-mainstream students are the most vulnerable ones. Most vulnerable students are the ones least likely to reach out to the teachers, take advantage of learning centers, office hours or ask questions for fear of being termed dummies or indolent ones (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). So, it is incumbent on the institutional agents to reach out to them first without unnecessary patronization (Rendon, 1994). “External support can eventually translate to internal strength as students gain confidence and agency” (Rendon & Munoz, 2011, p.27).

In contrast to mainstream students, non-traditional students are the ones for which going to college are not guaranteed due to an absence of graduate parents, economic constraints, and ethnic minority backgrounds (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). Second,

validation is most pertinent to nontraditional students and critical when administered very early in student initial experiences (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). More often than not, they lack mentors to guide them in navigating the college process requirements and financial aid application (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). Though going to college is a desirable option for the majority of these underserved student populations, they do not know how to ask for the help they need in order to be connected with requisite resources and support they need to succeed (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). Third, in the face of validation, students feel a sense of self-worth and more capable of learning (Rendon, 1994).

Fourth, validation is in-and out-of-class process on a consistent basis (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). Validation could be the answer to the success the underserved students are looking for (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). Rendon and Munoz (2011) report research conducted by Pennsylvania State University to determine students' external experiences on learning and retention. The researchers found the followings: (i) Significant differences exist between the way low-income and ethnic minority students experience their transition to college when compared to affluent and mainstream students (ii) With the passage of time, low-income and nontraditional students began to believe in their innate potential to succeed in college derived from affirmation of internal and external school agents (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). Many nontraditional students began to feel that they can succeed not because they became more involved in college life but because they received affirmation from significant others that they can succeed (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). Validation which strengthens students' motivation, self-worth and self-confidence to succeed should be authentic, caring and non-patronizing (Rendon, 1994).

Fifth, validation is likely a precursor for student development including the ability to learn and engagement in college life and activity (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). Validation has two core types namely academic and interpersonal. Academic validation occurs both in-and out-of-the classroom making students to “trust their innate capacity to learn and acquire confidence in being college students” (Rendon, 1994, p.40). Sixth, validation is a developmental process that serves as a means to an end which begins early and continues onward (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). They assert that academic validation takes place when instructors affirm students’ ability to learn and be successful. When an instructor acknowledges students’ prior knowledge, history, experiences, voice, and worldviews as part of funds of knowledge (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). When the students see themselves reflected in the curriculum of studies, and listen to accomplished individuals of their own backgrounds as guest speakers and even see themselves as presenters in the course of their studies (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). Emancipating pedagogy acknowledges diverse perspectives and “... allows both teachers and students to be holders and beneficiaries of knowledge, promotes an ethic of care, helps students find voice and self-worth, and works with a curriculum that is democratic, inclusive, and reflective of students’ backgrounds” (Rendon & Munoz, 2011, p. 22).

Interpersonal validation occurs when institutional agents take time in and out of the classroom to foster personal development and social maturity of students (Rendon, 1994). This process is present when instructors and assistants relate to students not only as students, but also as persons building support, caring, and good relationship with them (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). It is a process where institutional agents encourage students to develop cordial relations with each other through sharing study group and social

networking through cell phones (Rendon & Munoz, 2011). An institutional agent acts as such when within the adolescent social networks, the agent is able to access on behalf of the young adult invaluable information, for example, high school course requirements for admission to 4-year College (Stanton-Salazar, 2011). It is now time to turn over to what the national statistics are saying on students' academic eligibility and funding in dual enrollment programs.

2.4.0 National Reported Data on Dual Enrollment Programs

There is scanty data nationally with regard to the statistics of dual enrollment of high school students. Put differently, there are no national record chronicling dual enrollment students at post-secondary institutions (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). Qualitative measure examined survey offered to selected tertiary institutions to report on the occurrence of college course taken by high school students within and outside dual enrollment options during the 2002-03 academic year (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). Institutions with dual enrollment programs provided among other things information about the feature of their programs, academic eligibility requirements, funding and programs tailored specifically for at-risk-students (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). The institutions included both two-year, four-year, private and public ones. Kleiner and Lewis (2005) report on dual enrollment of high school students at postsecondary institutions to supply national data and statistics on this important area. The survey of Title IV degree-awarding tertiary institutions was conducted by National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) at the request of "the Office of Vocation and Adult Education, U.S Department of Education" (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005, p.1).

Academic Eligibility Requirements

Among the tertiary institutions that offer dual enrollment options, 85 percent had academic eligibility requirements for high schoolers who wish to participate (Keiner and Lewis, 2005). Ninety-three percent of public 4-year institutions, 83 percent of public 2-year institutions and 81 percent of private 4-year institutions had one form of academic requirement or the other for high school students to participate in dual enrollment (Keiner and Lewis, 2005). There was 66 percent of institutions with minimum high school grade point average (GPA) academic requirement compared to the 16 to 45 percent of the institutions who are for other forms of requirements (Keiner and Lewis, 2005). 16 percent of the institutions made use of minimum class ranking, 44 percent used college placement test while 45 percent used the minimum score on the standardized test to measure academic eligibility (Keiner and Lewis, 2005).

Other academic postsecondary requirements for high school participation in dual enrollment options are shared as follows. “Thirty-one percent had some other academic eligibility requirements, including recommendations or permission... course prerequisites, strong high school attendance, junior or senior grade level, or an essay or written letter” (Keiner and Lewis, 2005, p.12). Seventy-nine percent of public 4-year and 86 percent of private 4-year institutions used a minimum high school GPA compared to 46 percent of 2-year institutions as academic eligibility requirement (Keiner and Lewis, 2005). Seventy-three percent of public 2-year institutions required passing a college placement test compare to the 22 percent of public 4-year and 13 percent of private 4-year institutions (Keiner and Lewis, 2005). Sixty percent of public 4-year institutions compared to 43 percent of public 2-year and 37 percent of private 4-year institutions

demand a minimum score on a standardized test (Keiner & Lewis, 2005). Twenty-eight percent of public 4-year institutions compare to 8 percent of public 2-year and 19 percent of private 4-year required a minimum high school class rank (Keiner and Lewis, 2005).

Minimum High School GPA

There are some adjustments in the minimum GPA requirements found with 14-percent of the institutions (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). Only 15 percent of public 2-year institutions demand a minimum GPA ranging between 3.25 and 3.74 when compared to 27 percent of public 4-year institutions and 29 percent of private 4-year institutions that demand the same (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). Among the institutions that require a minimum high school GPA, 44 percent of the institutions require GPA between 2.75 and 3.24; 7 percent demand between 1.75 and 2.24, 10 percent demand between 2.25 and 2.74, 22 percent demand between 3.25 and 3.74 and 3 percent demand a minimum GPA of 3.75 and above (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005).

Comparability of Admission Standards

Among the 85 percent of tertiary institutions that demand academic requirements for their dual enrollment programs, 38 percent demand the same requirements for both dual enrollment students as well as regular college students, 62 percent varies in the demand they made of both dual enrollment students and regular college students (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). 21percent of public 4-year and 27 percent of private 4-year institutions make the same academic eligibility demand of dual enrollment student as regular full matriculated students compared to 45 percent of public 2-year institutions with the same demand (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005).

Funding

While 38 percent of post-secondary institutions provide directly or through waiver the tuition of their students, 64 percent require students or their parents to pay out-of-pocket (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). Thirty-seven percent of the institutions make tuition for dual enrollment through the high schools and public school districts, while 26 percent have the state funding the tuition (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). 9 percent had other sources of funding such as various federal and county grants, as well as scholarships from local businesses and non-profit organizations (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). 20 percent of institutions with dual enrollment programs made students and parents pay full tuition for college credit taken while another 20 percent made them pay partial tuition (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). 23 percent of the institutions demand students and parents generally pay for books and/ or fees only, and 19 percent makes no demand for students and parents (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). 19 percent of institutions state the amount paid out-of-pocket by students and parents varies (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). 28 percent of public 4-year institutions compared to 20 percent of public 2-year and 13 percent of private 4-year institutions indicated students and parents paid full tuition for the college courses taken in dual enrollment programs (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). 10 percent of public 2-year and 17 percent of public 4-year institutions make parents pay partially out-of-pocket for tuition compared to 38 percent of private 4-year institutions that do the same (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005).

2.4.1 The Impact of State's Policies on Dual Enrollment Programs

Though some high schools and colleges may have developed dual enrollment programs on their own accord, many depend on their state's policies for the development of their programs (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). In other words, good or bad state policies

can make or mar the existence, and practice of dual enrollment programs. Generally, an effort to ensure and regulate dual enrollment quality has been approached in two ways, through the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), and through state policies (Taylor, Borden & Parker, 2015). National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), is a voluntary national organization through which high school and college partnerships seek accreditation status provided they meet certain quality standards through a method like the one of program accreditation (Taylor, Borden & Parker, 2015). Many states use their policy to encourage high school students to engage in some form of accelerated learning (Barnett & Stamm, 2010).

However, this study will concentrate mainly on the policies dealing with students' eligibility and funding of dual enrollment programs without neglecting articulation and high school-college partnerships as this study touches on the challenges confronting dual enrollment programs. In many states, dual enrollment programs are gaining traction due to policymakers' desire to build a more educated workforce to match the demands of the emerging economy of contemporary times (Barnett & Stamm, 2010; Boswell, 2001). The key components of state policies on dual enrollment programs include the followings: "Determining the extent to which dual enrollment is mandatory or voluntary...Stipulating student eligibility requirements... and requirements for maintaining consistent educational quality across secondary and postsecondary institutions" (Barnett & Stamm, 2010, p.6).

State policies are struggling to answer these nagging questions: "Should there be statewide policy ensuring access to postsecondary options or is it best to allow communities and institutions to adopt those relationships that meet local needs? Is state

funding required in order to ensure equity across the state? (Boswell, 2001, pp.9-10).

Other questions are: What financial incentives should be provided to encourage participation among secondary schools and colleges...? Or does providing per diem support to both colleges and universities represent “double- dipping”...? Should financial assistance or incentives be provided to students to pay for...college-level courses?”

(Boswell, 2001, pp.9-10). These basic questions are some the driving force that guides states in the formulation of their policies regarding dual enrollment programs.

2.5.0 The Challenges to Equity in Dual Enrollment Programs

In general, there are so many challenges that beset dual enrollment programs and equitable representation of Black and low-income students in particular. However, the study will focus on the availability and affordability of dual enrollment programs.

Availability and affordability of dual enrollment are like two sides of the same coin- accessibility of the program. In sum, the focal point of my strategic problem of practice is an underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs due to inadequate preparation of the students by educators and poor funding of the program.

2.5.1 Insufficient Funding for Dual Enrollment Programs

The cost associated with dual enrollment programs is of great concern to relevant stakeholders: Policymakers, secondary and postsecondary educators, taxpayers, students and their families (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). It is pertinent to consider the cost of dual enrollment from the perspectives of all the stakeholders-governments, schools, colleges, students and their families as they affect the policies that ultimately determine the cost of the programs (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). However, it is better to do so with a bias in favor

of Black students and students from low-income families. This is what social justice and equity are all about. Across the nation, it is the state and local governments that foot most of the bill that is associated with dual enrollment programs based on a per-student basis (Barnett & Stamm, 2010).

Affordability is of great concern to Black and low-income students in the quest to participate in dual enrollment programs. Meanwhile, all eligible students across schools in every state do not have equal access to dual enrollment programs. Hoffman (2005) proposal that “funding mechanism be based on the principle of no cost to students and no harm to partnering institutions” (p.2) is far from being realized. In some states, the courses are taught free of charge to the students (Hoffman, 2005). In others, students and their families must pay for college tuition, fees, books and transportation arising from dual enrollment programs (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Hence, every family has to weigh the cost against the benefits in order to participate (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). For example, in Arizona, Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, and North Dakota State, students pay the tuition (McCarthy, 1999). This is not favorable to average and low-income families (Barnett & Stamm, 2010, p.12). In other cases, colleges receive funding from foundations and external grants to foot the bills associated with dual enrollment programs (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). In Georgia, there is a HOPE scholarship sustained through a lottery that supports students’ tuition (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Barnett and Stamm (2010) report that “In California, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges created a tuition waiver for dual enrollment students to ensure that no high school student pays for college attendance” (p.14). The City University of New York (CUNY) offers tuition waiver to high school students enrolled in college credit

courses even as it has a long-standing partnership with New York Department of Education to offer various college credit options (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). “In Ohio, the Post-Secondary Option program finances college tuition, fees and other costs (e.g. books) for high school students in dual enrollment courses by transferring a portion of the state’s public school per-student allocation to the college (Barnett & Stamm, 2010, p.14).

In Pennsylvania State, with regard to the cost associated with dual enrollment the policy states as follows: “Combination of student’s district and student/ parent. A school entity... pays the portion of total approved costs for which it is provided grants by the department of education, and students/parents pay the remainder” (Zinth, 2016, para.3). Sequel to the budget cutbacks in the education of the past administration in Pennsylvanian State, “Dual enrollment programs have been defunded” (Zinth, 2016, para.3). Some school districts either denied the program or shifted the tuition cost, fees, and books entirely to the students and their families (Milburn, 2015, n.p). The worse affected areas are poor neighborhoods, communities and school districts where most of the Black students are concentrated (Velasquez, Andre, Shanks, & Meyer, 2014). Black and low-income students and their families will be struggling with their meager resources to foot their bills as well as a reserve to sponsor college credit tuition. The stark reality is that funding college credits for high school students are heavy on the racial/ethnic minority and students from low-income backgrounds.

Funding is the engine house that drives dual enrollment programs. Without adequate and comprehensive funding, many eligible high school students who have an interest will not be able to participate. They will have so many things to pay for such as tuition, textbooks, transportation, college placement exam, and lab fees (Cassidy, Keating

&Young, 2010). Dual enrollment puts extra-ordinary expenses on high school programs which are paid for by the government, high school, colleges, students and their families (Cassidy, Keating &Young, 2010). Apart from the numerous bills and expenses that are facing low-income parents, they will have to eke out the tuition fees, which can be expensive depending on the number of credits a student is taking each term or academic year. Meanwhile, while affluent families can seek out post-secondary educational opportunities for their children and pay for it and build a record of college credits for their children; many low-income students who might benefit from the program cannot do so (Hoffman, 2005; McCarthy, 1999). Hence, the already existing opportunity gap and disparity in the education system in the U.S continues to widen.

Reallocation of Tax-dollar for Tuition

In some states, students can participate in dual enrollment free of charge; in other places, they are to pay out-of-pocket (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). Howley, et.al. (2003) investigation of the prospects and challenges facing dual enrollment and early college with reference to tertiary institutions and high schools in a Midwestern state shows that there is often a conflict of interests with regard to funding. They argue that the state policy that requires districts to pay tuition to colleges for students enrolled in early college and dual credit programs raises squabbles that remain unresolved (Howley, et.al. 2013). Hence, while the college may want more students to participate, the high school may not want many students to be involved since the school district has to remit tuition cost per student (Howley et.al. 2013; McCarthy, 1999). “Tension about funding and recruitment, moreover, eroded trust between college and high school educators, at least to some degree” (Howley, et al. 2013, p.89). Schools that lose funding when students take

college courses are often hesitant to engender their participation. The college not fully funded for the high school students that they serve is unlikely to offer dual enrollment courses. Adequate funding of dual enrollment programs will enhance the access and success of a broad spectrum of students (Barnett & Stamm, 2010).

Tuition

Tuition constitutes the bulk of dual enrollment expenses. Fifteen states require the district to foot the tuition of their dual enrollment participants on behalf of the students or/ and the states (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Twenty-two states require students and their parents to pay the tuition while few other states are reticent on the matter leaving it to local institutions to decide (Karp, Bailey, Hughes, and Fermin, 2005). Two states namely Georgia and Tennessee have extended their state scholarship generated through state lottery profit to dual enrollment students with eligible academic qualification (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Even in states with amenable policies toward the funding of dual enrollment programs, strict guidelines regarding the courses to fund abound (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). For example, the state of North Carolina does not fund courses taught in high school or required for students' diploma (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Hence, colleges are developing knack for course not offered by high schools in order to attract state funding (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Some colleges are coming up with innovative courses in the areas of technical education, business education and career education that hitherto not known to their partnering high schools in order to attract the required funding for their programs (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010).

In places, where a state is not funding dual enrollment, high schools and colleges are developing an arrangement with regard to funding. One of the strategies for saving tuition costs for dual enrollment programs is to teach it at a high school during normal school hours by qualified high school teachers (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Though it may be cost-effective, as there are no extra-salaries for the teachers, it is bereft of the benefits associated with studying at a college campus (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). In some cases, colleges are willing to waive tuition for dual enrollment for several reasons. They include the followings: to create a retinue of students who are likely to continue and complete their degrees at the college after their high school graduation; and demonstration of the college's commitment to the welfare of its community (AIR/SRI, 2009). Others are to ensure equity for the underrepresented minorities, to prepare high school students adequately with rigorous courses and reduce the likelihood of remediation when they are at college full time (AIR/SRI, 2009).

Textbooks

Besides tuition, textbooks are another expense that dual enrollment programs have to grapple with. Most of the states do not finance textbooks and only 12 states clearly address textbook issues in their policies (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (2006) submits that among the 12 states that discussed policy issue with regard to the cost of textbooks, three require students to take care of their textbooks. Six require either the district or/ both college to play some part in the cost of the textbooks while three offer some state grants to make up for the books of dual enrollment students. "Where programs do not cover textbooks costs, requiring students to do so could drastically reduce participation, particularly among traditionally

underrepresented students who are less than typically college-bound students” (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010, p.14). In other words, the cost of textbooks could be a prohibitive factor for an underprivileged child from taking dual enrollment courses (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Some schools are adopting more strategies to save costs in textbooks expenses and some school programs are buying books directly from publishers or online at reduced prices (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010).

Transportation

Most state policies remain reticent on whether dual enrollment program is to take place at the high school or college campus or both. Even where some waded into the issue, it is to issue a disclaimer with regard to bearing the responsibility of transportation of dual enrollees (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). However, a few states have some provisions for a district or give a grant to a district to reimburse under-resourced families for their expenses on transportation (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2006). The cost of transportation remains an obstacle to low-income and minority families who want to participate in dual enrollment programs. The accessibility of dual enrollment programs through online or virtually is quite helpful to students who may be hampered by transportation cost to college campuses (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). However, those students will be deprived of the direct college campus experience.

Student Attendance Funding

Apart from tuition, textbooks, and transportation, student attendance calculus with regard to college courses remain a key issue in dual enrollment programs (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Programs also determine the indirect way average daily attendance (ADA) and full-time equivalent (FTE) are deciphered (Cassidy, Keating &

Young, 2010). State policy and high school-college partnership memorandum of understanding (MOU) guide funding and other components of dual enrollment. “State policy specifies how high schools and colleges receive ADA and FTE funding for Dual Enrollment, which local program partnerships must take into account” (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010, p.16). Based on the state policies, Cassidy, Keating, and Young (2010) states as follows: “First, “Both the high school and the college receive state Average Daily Attendance (ADA) and Full-Time Equivalency ... funds, respectively, for a student’s attendance in a Dual Enrollment course” (p.15). Second, is a situation only the college receives FTE for student’s actual time in a dual enrollment course (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Third, is a proportional split formula where the school district receives a portion of the ADA and loses some proportion of it to college for the time the student spent in college courses during a school day, and college still receives FTE connected with student’s attendance (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010).

While some states’ policies provide for full ADA and FTE funding for both high schools and colleges for dual enrollment students, others do not. Further, this proportional split formula of ADA could create a possible barrier to the high school-college partnership and may discourage some high schools from participating in enhanced comprehensive programs, as they would not like to lose a portion of their ADA (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). A way of school district retaining full ADA may be to schedule dual enrollment courses outside high school hours (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Even this arrangement may inhibit students from engaging in other co-curricular and extracurricular activities (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). “It is important to seek alternative solutions to defray costs when establishing Dual Enrollment programs so that

programs can be sustained and the costs for students and their families are manageable” (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 201, p.16). Some state policies dictate in precise terms how community colleges should partner with their school districts (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010) while others are flexible (AIR/SRI. 2009). The degree of success in the establishment and maintenance of any form of dual enrollment program is dependent on the quality of the district-college partnership (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010).

2.5.2 Admission and Inequitable Access

Meanwhile, dual enrollment has no equal access for all eligible students across schools in every state. In Pennsylvania, for example, dual enrollment though permitted is not mandated (Hoffman, 2005). More often than not, schools in the poor neighborhood are less likely to offer the opportunity to students than the ones in viable areas. Even where and when they do, rigid student eligibility requirements become an impediment to racial/ ethnic minority and low-income students who are most in need of the programs (Taylor, Borden, & Park, 2015).

Student Eligibility Requirements

Dual enrollment programs still operate as an elitist institution meant only for the exceptionally talented few privileged ones (Hoffman, 2005). While the national data show that 98% of public two-year institutions offer dual enrollment courses beyond any other institutional type (Thomas, Marken, Gray, & Lewis, 2013), “...our study suggests that restrictions on student eligibility are the most common dimension of state policy” (Taylor, Borden, & Park, 2015, p.16). Beside eligibility standards established in most states’ policies, universities have their criteria and high schools their standards (Allen, 2010). Hoffman (2005) reported, “Many states restrict dual enrollment to juniors and

seniors and peg eligibility to “all or nothing” criteria, such as overall GPA or a single test score” (p.13).

In practice, there are variances from state to state with regard to criteria of qualification to be eligible for enrollment in dual programs (Hoffman, 2005; McCarthy, 1999). Some states set a very high bar while others consider average students, and low achieving students (Brewerr, Stern & Ahn, 2007; Hoffman, 2005; Jobs for the Future, 2008). Even in and around Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania State, discrepancies abound with regard to minimum GPA requirements for admission. For example, the minimum GPA requirements for entry into the following institutions stand as follows: “Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) 2.0, Robert Morris University (RMU) 2.5, Penn State University (PSU) 3.0...” (Milburn, 2015, n.p). Cognizant that participation in postsecondary enrollment opportunities requires planning and preparation, many states demand that school districts notify all prospective students by March 1 of any postsecondary enrollment options available for the subsequent fall term (Boswell, 2001). Some state requires counseling for students and /or a permission slip from parents that they understand the commitments associated with high school student enrollment in college credit course (Boswell, 2001). Meanwhile, placing arbitrary restrictive criteria, which are not founded on research and exemplary practices end up hurting the very type of students who are most in need of dual enrollment programs for their success (Taylor, Borden, & Park, 2015). Hence, the low-income and minority students end up with inequitable opportunity and access to dual enrollment programs because of poor funding of the program and inadequate preparation by educators.

2.6.0 Inadequate Preparation of Black and Low-income Students

Venezia, Kirst, and Antonio, (2003) found that 88 percent of eighth graders of American high school students of all races and backgrounds have a high aspiration for postsecondary education but only 70 percent get to make it to tertiary institutions. This is due to the disjuncture between K-12 schools and post-secondary education and other barriers (Venezia, Kirst & Antonio, 2003). Since almost all students aspire to attend postsecondary education, it makes sense that they should all be prepared for postsecondary options and college (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Navigating from high school to college is not easy for some students (Hoffman, Vargas & Santos, 2009). It is even worse for Black and low-income students. High schools have not met the aspiration of youths with necessary and well-designed resources to prepare all students academically for college (Karp, Bailey, Hughes, & Fermin, 2004; Venezia, Kirst & Antonio, 2003). “Despite their high aspirations, not enough students are well-prepared...and not enough complete college...Completing a degree, or even enrolling in college-level courses, requires higher levels of academic preparation” (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003, p.7).

Inadequate college preparation continues to plague the U.S school system (Karp, Bailey, Hughes, & Fermin, 2004). “There are, however, some deep inequalities throughout the systems in areas such as college counseling, college preparation, course offerings, and connections with local postsecondary institutions” (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003, n.p). There are unequal opportunities and incentives in such areas as college centers, college visits by high school students and college recruiters’ visit to high schools with regard to low-minority and high-minority high schools (Venezia, Kirst, &

Antonio, 2003). A better understanding of what high minority and low minority schools offer students provides a basis for reform that yields better college and career readiness for a broad spectrum of students (Bryant, 2015). Affluent and school districts who are predominantly White have greater exposure to college enhancing mechanisms and incentives when compared to high-minority school districts (Bryant, 2015).

Lack of Appropriate Number of School Counselors

The importance of school counselors in steering students towards college aspiration and attainment cannot be overemphasized (Bryant, 2015). Bryant (2015) opines that the U.S student-to-counselor ratio is excessively high to afford top quality individualized attention that all students deserve. Bryant (2015) submits that to improve college readiness for Black students, quality pre-service training of teacher, reduction in student-to-counselor ratio, as well as a relationship based on trust and high expectations are necessary. College aspiration, academic planning, enrichment, and extra-curricular involvement, college and career evaluations, cost-effective planning, admission process, and effective transition are eight components of college and career preparedness (The College Board, 2010).

Counselors are principal agents in school system charged with the mandate for equipping the students with the adequate knowledge they need to prepare for post-secondary education. Counselors have numerous commitments competing for their time and attention such as test administration, course scheduling, disciplinary related issues, special education support services and mental health care (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Owing to the numerous commitments, which counselors face on daily basis students are left with fewer options with regard to those who are skilled in matters that

pertain to transition to college (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Honor teachers often try to fill in some of the gaps that an insufficient number of counselors create yet they are not as much connected with college preparation skills as the counselors (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003).

The absence of High-Quality Teachers

The impact of effective teachers in the academic achievement of students is evident. One of the best ways to ensure college and career readiness of African- American student is to provide them with great teachers who are well educated, experience and steep in cultural competence (Bryant, 2015). The ways in which teacher qualities are positively affecting students' college and career readiness have been articulated in high-quality instruction in rigorous subjects, the high expectation from students and positive relationships with students, domestic and academic staff (Flores, 2007; Reid & Moore, 2008). Many of the Black students complete high schools without attending college and when they do, they must go through remedial or development course on their path to success (Bryant, 2015). It is evident that teacher credential status, years of experience and educational pedigree have significant effects in reducing the number of students who will be in need of remediation while in college (Guarino, Brown, & Wyse, 2011; Howell 2011).

The scarcity of the number of counselors as well as varied curricular pathways tends to impede the college and career preparedness and success of many students (Venezia, Kirst & Antonio, 2003). Because teachers in honor classes are more involved in college counseling when compared to non-honor teachers, the students who are not in honor classes are at a disadvantaged position (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Hence,

students in honor class and college prep courses have more advantage in college preparation from teachers compared to non-honor students (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Several teachers reported that many students talked to them about college planning more than they did to the counselors, even as teachers are not better equipped to guide the students on the matter (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Most K-12 educators articulated the difficulties facing them and their students as scanty college preparation curricula and inadequate college preparation of students by teachers and counselors (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003).

Lack of Access to Rigorous Curriculum

One of the reasons for the Black students' lack of college and career readiness is due to the absence of access to rigorous curriculum. Students who have more access to the rigorous and enhanced curriculum while they are in high school are more likely to gain entrance into and succeed in college (Adelman 1999; McGee, 2013). United States Department of Education (2014) enunciates these courses as contributory to students' college readiness. They are algebra I, algebra II, geometry, calculus, biology, chemistry, and physics. It is a common phenomenon to track Black and low-income students into low-level courses instead of college enhancing subjects (Gorski, 2013; Moore, Edmonson, Combs, Bustamante & Onwuegbuzie, 2010; Taylor, Borden, & Park, 2015). "Many children of the poor, of minorities, of different cultures, come to school unprepared to learn; de facto school segregation still exists; and tracking, putting people in their place, still is a dominant educational practice" (Howe, 1997, p.vii). Students in accelerated curricular tracks receive better signal to college preparation when compared to the students who are not in honor classes (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003).

On the average, honor students enroll in rigorous subjects to help them gain admission into elite institutions, while the non-honor students assume they could gain admission to post-secondary school not minding the nature of their subjects (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Students tracked out of high-level course works lack the opportunity they need to gather critical information for their college and career aspiration and readiness (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). There is little or no doubt that students in honor classes have more opportunity to receive information that leads to a more informed decision about their college preparedness (Venezia, Kirst & Antonio, 2003). Students in high-level courses receive information from a variety of sources namely teachers, counselors, recruitment officials, peers, and parents, while students in middle and low-level courses do not have all these opportunities (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003).

Many students and their parents have a vague idea of what the expectations are with regard to college preparation and admission (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Many low-income parents often lack the information and experience regarding college preparation for their children (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Students' knowledge of curricular requirements for college preparation was hazy and inadequate as less than 12 percent of students surveyed knew all the curricular requirements of the studied tertiary institutions (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Those students who are likely to possess the least information about dual enrollment, registration and the eligibility requirements for college are arguably those who stand to benefit most from participating in college courses while in high school (Taylor, Borden, & Park, 2015). Students are not aware of the placement exams they need in order to qualify for college admission. "Across the

studied states, less than one-half of the sampled students knew the specific placement testing policies for the institutions in the study” (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003, n.p). Traditionally underserved students are more likely to lack access to college preparation opportunities, high-quality counseling and be exposed to remedial coursework in college compared to their privileged counterparts (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). There is inequity even in dissemination of college preparation information to parents as 74 percent, 71 percent, and 66 percent of high-income families received college preparation information compared to 42 percent, 44 percent, and 47 percent of low-income families who received the same in Illinois, Maryland, and Oregon respectively (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003).

Bryant (2015) affirms that college and career readiness rest upon access to rigorous college preparatory courses, experienced teachers, and resourceful school counselors. Black and low-income students are less likely to have access to rigorous courses, experienced teachers and school counselors in comparison to their White and high-income counterparts (Bryant, 2015). These unfavorable conditions of Black and low-income students lead to under-service and inadequate preparation for college and career readiness. In other words, there are lack of access and equitable opportunities for Black and low-income students to participate in dual enrollment programs when compared to their White and high-income counterparts. Affordability and accessibility are two sides of the same coin when it comes to the impediments facing Black and low-income students in their aspiration and participation in dual credit programs.

2.7.0 Situating Evidence in Practice

2.7.1 Policy Contextual Review

Definitively speaking, policies are courses of action adopted by a governing body or an authority to guide or regulate organizations or institutions, which may be necessary for the smooth and orderly running of them (Fowler, 2013). Dual enrollment programs are practiced in a local context but within the confines of state policy and institutional guidelines. However, state policies with regard to dual enrollment components and practices vary from one state to another, in terms of high school-college collaboration, the articulation of credits, funding modalities, and student participants and support system (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). School and college partnership must continue to evolve in ways that navigate through supportive and inhibitive state policies (Cassidy, Keating & Young, 2010). Federal, state, and local policies on finance and access continue to affect for better or worse education in general and dual enrollment programs in particular. The importance of policy in the evolution and practice of educational leaders cannot be over-emphasized. Fowler (2013) puts one of the central duties of educational leaders as to “implement policies”. However, she argues that in our time in order to achieve legitimate educational goals, it has become necessary for educational leaders and scholarly practitioners to not just implement policies but also to influence good policies (Fowler, 2013).

These are some of the state policies affecting dual enrollment program in Southwestern Pennsylvania. The study will focus on the ones affecting access/opportunity, and uncertainty facing funding of dual enrollment programs in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In terms of access, though school districts are

permitted, they are not obligated to participate in dual enrollment (Zinth, 2016). On the issue of funding, Pennsylvania policy states that the onus is on student's school district and student/ parent (Zinth, 2016). A school district pays the portion of total costs for which it is given grants by the department of education, and students/parents pay the rest (Zinth, 2016). Meanwhile, given the budget cut in education, dual enrollment has been defunded in Pennsylvania State.

There are policies that guide dual enrollment programs essentially at state and local levels. College level policies take care of both districts and their high schools since it is a college-high school partnership. Usually, the memorandum of understanding makes it easy. Dual enrollment programs, which may be "High School Based" or "College Based" formulate the policies that guide the programs in relation to their partnering high schools and their districts. An example of a policy of "High school-based" of Zenith University is the earning of concurrent credit. It reiterates that a registered student gets college credits which are applicable to a college degree as well as high school diploma (College in High School of Zenith University, 2017a, para.1).

Another example of educational policy and procedure of dual enrollment of Zenith University is the cost of the program to the students and their families. It states, "And... courses cost a fraction of regular in-state tuition" (College in High School of Zenith University, 2017b, para.1). In other words, notwithstanding that these students are in high school where they are supposed to be under the patronage of public fund, they are required to fund their programs. This is because the State policy is that the students and their families are to pay a fraction of the cost of their studies in dual enrollment programs. Moreover, the situation of financing dual enrollment is worse than stated in the

policy since in practice dual enrollment has been defunded in the state of Pennsylvania due to budgetary constraint (Zinth, 2016). Colleges are doing what they can to ameliorate the burden of funding dual enrollment by students and their families. For example, in the 2016-2017 academic year, most courses cost just \$235 (The one-credit Right Start to College class is just \$75; General chemistry 1 cost just \$310, which includes a lab fee) which is at least 20 percent less of regular in-state college tuition (College in High School of Zenith University, 2017b, para.2).

2.7.2 Programs Context Review

Moreover, the reason for the existence of dual enrollment programs is to bridge the gap that exists between high school and postsecondary institutions. A gap exists between high school completion and college requirements that many students are not able to overcome (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). In other words, many students find themselves lacking in college and career readiness by the time they complete their high school requirements (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). This is even more so for ethnic minorities and low-income students. Dual enrollment programs provide many opportunities for meeting these challenges. Out of every 100 of 9th graders in Pennsylvania, National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education states that 77 will make it on time for their diploma, 47 will enroll in college immediately upon graduation, and 37 will surface for sophomore year while 28 will graduate within 3 years or 6 years with an associate degree or bachelor's degree respectively (Shorr, 2005). Hence, for every 9th grade in Pennsylvania state about 28 students out of 100 students will be expected to bag their associate degree in 3 years or bachelor's degree in 6 years. The

situation is unacceptable, hence the need for dual enrollment which grants easy access and success in college for participating students.

Unfortunately, many people still perceive dual enrollment programs as elitist institutions meant to serve the interest of advanced students and not all students. Hence, in many states, locality, and institutions, people of color remain at the margin when it comes to the programs. In Pennsylvania state, dual enrollment is for the capable, not just the exceptional student (Shorr, 2005). Pennsylvania dual enrollment grant program targets students who prove that they have the knowledge and skills to succeed in a non-remedial college course (Shorr, 2005, p.1-2). By this policy statement, Pennsylvania tries to distance itself from an elitist view of dual enrollment program as an advanced program but falls short of it as equity programs. How can Black and low-income students demonstrate the knowledge and skills to succeed in non-remedial college courses when they have not been well prepared to develop such capacity? More often than not Black and low-income students remain underprepared and underrepresented in dual enrollment programs. Even where and when they have comparable representation, they remain underserved due to lack of a comprehensive support system that makes for success.

Museus, Lutovsky, and Colbeck (2007) conducted a survey of two and four-year colleges and universities in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The designing of the survey was to gather information on who participated in dual enrollment programs in Pennsylvania during the 2003-4 academic year. The survey included questions about the number of dual-enrolled participants, their race/ ethnicity, gender, and family socio-economic background. Of the 89 two-year and four-year postsecondary institutions identified serving 12,410 students in Pennsylvania, 42 institutions serving 5,475

responded constituted about 47 percent. The research indicates a monumental inequity in demographic characteristics with regard to access and participation in dual enrollment programs in Pennsylvania.

- Table 2: Proportion of Total Dual Enrollment Participation by Race/Ethnicity and Poverty Level. It consists of the comparison of the proportion of total public secondary school enrollment and the proportion of total dual enrollment participation by various demographic groups in Pennsylvania. While the White and Asian high school students participated at a proportionately high level, the Black and Latino students were disproportionately underrepresented in the 2003-4 academic year. On the one hand, while the White high students made up 78%, they participated at the rate of 90% in the dual enrollment. While the Asian students made up 2% of high school student population they participated at the rate of 3%. On the other hand, while the Black students constituted 15% of high schoolers, they participated only at the rate of 5%, and the Latinos made up 5% but participated at the rate of 2%. In sum, the representations of the Black students and Latino students are more likely to be disproportionate in dual enrollment programs in Pennsylvania.

A close look at the participation of Pennsylvania public secondary students based on the poverty level measured by students' reception of free or reduced lunch indicates similar disproportionality. While students with low poverty level participated at a very high rate in dual enrollment, those with high poverty level participated at a very low rate. The chart indicates approximately 50% of the students living in a low poverty area, participated at the rate of 69% in dual enrollment. Conversely, those at the third quartile of families in poverty made up 20% of total high school participants took part in dual

enrollment only at the rate of 5%. At last, the students at the fourth and last quartile of poverty level while consisting of 1.4% of the total student population, participated in dual enrollment at the rate of 0.8%. In sum, the result indicates some inverse, proportional correlation that the higher the poverty the less the students are likely to participate while the less the poverty the more the students are likely to participate in dual enrollment programs in Pennsylvania.

Table 2 PA Dual Enrollment Participation by Race/Ethnicity and Poverty Level.
(Museus, Lutovsky, & Colbeck, 2007).

Race/ Ethnicity	Proportion of total dual Enrollment participation	Proportion of total public secondary school enrollment
White	89.9%	78.1%
Asia	3.0%	2.2%
Black	5.2%	14.8%
Latino	1.8%	4.8%
Poverty quartile	Proportion of total dual enrollment participation	Proportion of total public secondary school enrollment
Low	68.8%	49.5%
2 nd	25.2%	28.9%
3 rd	5.2%	20.2%
High	0.8%	1.4%

Table 2 PA Dual Enrollment participation by Race/ Ethnicity and Poverty Level
(Museus, Lutovsky & Colbeck, 2007).

In the 2003-4 academic year, both two and four-year tertiary institutions participated in dual enrollment programs. Table 3 indicates that when students are disaggregated into two and four-year postsecondary education institutions, the racial/ ethnic and economic disparities in the type of institutions students attended becomes eloquent. While White students made up 82% of those who attended the two-year institution, they constituted 93% of four-year universities. On the other hand, Blacks and Latinos made up of 11% and 4% of those who attend the two-year institution, they made up 3% and 1% of those who attended four-year institution respectively. On the socio-economic status, students from the two lower quartiles of poverty level made up 90% of four-year institutions and 74% of the two-year institution, while the students in the third and four quartiles of poverty level made up 26% of those in the two-year, and just about 10% of those in the four-year institutions. In other words, most indigent students are more likely to be concentrated in two-year institutions, while the low-poverty or affluent students are likely to have disproportionate representation at a four-year tertiary institution.

- Table 3 below, the proportion of Total Dual Enrollment Participation at Two- and Four-Year Institutions by Race/ Ethnicity and Poverty Level. Taken from Museus, Lutovsky, & Colbeck, (2007).

Table 3 PA Dual Enrollment Participation at Two- and Four-Year Institutions by Race/ Ethnicity and Poverty Level. Taken from (Museus, Lutovsky, & Colbeck, 2007).



Race/ Ethnicity	Two-year college	Four-year college
White	81.5%	92.8%
Asia	3.8%	2.7%
Black	11.0%	3.3%
Latino	3.8%	1.2%
Poverty quartile	Two-year colleges	Four-year colleges
Low	56.1%	65.0%
2 nd	17.8%	25.3%
3 rd	21.6%	9.6%
High	4.4%	0.1%

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Table 3 PA Dual Enrollment participation at Two and Four-year Institutions by Race/ Ethnicity and Poverty Level (Museus, Lutovsky & Colbeck, 2007).

However, there are two dual enrollment programs in Southwestern Pennsylvania, which I have referred pseudonymously as “College Based” program of Regent University and “High School Based” program of Zenith University, who are trying to beat the odds and to meet the needs of Black and low-income students. While College in High school program of Zenith University has been serving student since 30 years ago, College based program started about 10 years ago in high school students to transit smoothly to college. These two programs offer high school students the opportunity to earn college credits while still in high schools. The two programs have passed the planning and implementations stages and are now at the maintenance stage. Each of the programs has gotten an established culture. I have explored the needs and assets of “College Based” of Regent University and “High school Based” of Zenith University through discussion, dialogue circle, and correspondence. Parts of their assets are longevity, openness to equity and system of support.

The study will describe how the programs are attempting to reach a broad spectrum of students as well as the programs’ features that appear to meet the needs of the average and low achieving students for college and career readiness. The study aims at improving college and career readiness and success of Black and low-income students through their equitable participation in dual enrollment programs. I hope to achieve this purpose while working in close collaboration with the programs’ staff and former students who have gone through the programs. Just like many other dual enrollment programs, “College Based” of Regent University has college based campus classes while “High School Based” of Zenith University has high school-based college classes in their collaboration with their partnering high schools.

CHAPTER 3: Research Design and Methodology

The overarching objective of the research endeavor is to achieve equitable participation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs for their college and career readiness and success. It has been deemed a good policy to provide Black and low-income high school youth with equitable opportunities to pursue and excel in college education through dual enrollment programs (Museus, Lutovsky, & Colbeck, 2007). This can reposition them to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are necessary for college and career readiness, contemporary jobs skills, to make good money and contribute to the growth of modern democratic society. Two dual enrollment programs “College based” of Regent University and “High School based” of Zenith University were selected based on the followings: They have withstood the test of time, have established cultures, shown promises of inclusiveness, and have proven diversity for White students, Black students, high income as well as low-income students. There were two kinds of sites: "College based" program is one that offers college courses at the college campus, "High School based" program is another that offers college courses at high school sites. The study intends to identify and investigate the factors, features, strategies, and conditions that promote equitable participation, retention, and success of Black and low-income students in the dual enrollment programs.

3.1.0 Research Design and Procedures

The proven efficacy of dual enrollment programs is well established (An, 2013a; Barnett & Stamm, 2010; Foster, 2010). However, what is less known is how these programs actually work in practice for students who have successfully completed them, and how information about these practices can be used to improve the programs

themselves for equitable access and success of Black students and students from low-income families. Numerous studies have attested to the efficacy of dual enrollment (An, 2013; Foster, 2010; Hoffman, 2005; Hugo, 2001; Koszoru, 2005; Smith, 2007). However, what makes for success has not been fully explored and articulated in research.

The design of this research is based on:

- 1) In-depth qualitative interviews and questionnaire data from graduates of the two programs—"College Based" and "High School Based" in Southwestern Pennsylvania.
- 2) Interviews and questionnaire data from site visits with Program practitioners.
- 3) Demographic and operational information from these programs' practitioners through surveys/ questionnaires based on existing records, manuals, and administrative dataset.

The study made use of qualitative measures including interviews, focus group interviews, and phenomenological inquiry in generating data that enable the researcher to examine the issues that promote equitable participation and success of Black students and students from low income-families in dual enrollment programs. This study utilizes qualitative methodology and is investigative in nature. While quantitative measures deal with "...measuring, predicting and controlling, qualitative research is concerned with exploring, digging deeper, and understanding what things mean" (Shank, Brown, and Pringle, 2014, pp.18-19). The researcher conducted surveys/ questionnaires regarding "College Based" and "High School Based" programs in the Pittsburgh region of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with the practitioners of the two programs to determine demographic characteristics of the student participants.

The researcher conducted interviews with the practitioners of the program, as well as diverse student populations-Black students and students from low-income families who

passed through the two programs to generate data regarding the dynamics that promote equitable recruitment, persistence, and success of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. “Interviews focused on program structure, student recruitment and selection, curriculum, support services, collaborative relationships, staff development, and students’ experiences in the program” (Karp and Hughes, 2008b, p. 843). The researcher compared the two dual enrollment programs from the Pittsburgh region to each other by looking at their differences and similarities with regard to mechanisms-the preparatory programs, learning environment, mentorship, advisories, family involvement, and support system to mention but a few, that promote equitable participation and success for Black students and students from low-income families, and what we can learn from each program to enhance the growth and improvement of these programs.

3.1.1 Instruments

The study made use of survey protocols, and semi-structured interview protocols (see Appendixes A-C below). The researcher conducted surveys/questionnaires on the diversity regarding “College Based” and “High School Based” programs. In Appendix A, Questions 1 to 3 is adapted with slight modifications from Museus, Lutovsky, and Colbeck (2007). Semi-structured interview questions are presented for use with participating program practitioners (administrators, and counselors). Focus group interviews were used with some of the program practitioners which elaborated on the existing interview questions. In Appendix B, Semi-structured interview questions were used with participating Black students and students from low-income families. In Appendix C, semi-structured interview Questions 1 to 3, on collaboration, and funding; Questions 2 to 5, on programs’ support services and Question 3 on programs’ outcome

are adapted with slight modification from Barnett, Bucceri, Hindi and Kim, 2011 and Edward and Haynes, 2011 in Purnell, (2014).

3.1.2 Recruit of Subjects (participants): Sample, Selection, and Size

Participants came from the pool of students who have successfully graduated from either “College Based” or “High School Based” dual enrollment programs. The Directors of the programs, “College Based” and “High School Based” were contacted in writing and in person to find former students who were interested in participating in the study. The study made use of purposeful sampling to obtain administrators, councilors as well as former successful students who were interested in the study. The diverse student participants including Black students, White students, low-poverty level as well as high-poverty level students. The subjects who expressed interest in participating were briefed on the purposes and procedures of the study. Administrators and counselors, as well as former students who participated, were asked to sign consent forms before the research proceeded (see Appendix D and E).

The study made use of purposeful sampling because as specialized programs, the study identified and used participants who have knowledge and experience of the programs. Tomal (2003) submits that “Researchers will begin with a clear understanding of the characteristics of the subjects of the study” (p.26). Shank, Brown, and Pringle (2014) observed that purposive sampling is found more frequently in qualitative discourse. The researcher collected data through interviews from a former Black student, and other students of lower-income families who have successfully completed their dual enrollment programs. So the characteristics of the student participants included Black student and other students of lower-income families who have successfully completed

their dual enrollment programs. The study included administrators, councilors, and former students who were 18 years or older who have passed successfully through either one or the other dual enrollment programs. “In this case, the sample consists of persons who have unique backgrounds or characteristics that made them the target of closer individual study” (Shank, Brown, and Pringle, 2014, p.65). The study involved 3 administrators, 2 councilors, 3 former students from “High School Based” program, and 2 administrators, 3 councilors and 1 former student from “College Based” programs. They were 5 administrators, 5 Guidance-councilors, and 4 former students to form 14 participants in total for the study. In sum, the study involves 2 Universities, 5 high schools, 4 former students, 5 administrators, and 5 counselors altogether.

3.1.3 Informed Consent Procedure

After approaching the Directors of the programs as well as the liaison officers at the colleges and high schools respectively, I requested to speak with those who were interested in participating in the study. My target was those students who have completed either from “College Based” or “High School Based” programs successfully. The informed consent forms (see Appendix D and E) together with the surveys/questionnaires (see Appendix A to C) were delivered to the successfully graduated former students and programs’ practitioners by the researcher directly by hand or electronically. In addition, the researcher explained to the participants what the informed consent was all about.

3.1.4 Method and Sources of Data Collection.

The researcher made several visits to the sites of “College Based” and “High school Based” programs. Invitations were extended to 20 subjects including practitioners and former students to participate in the study. 14 subjects opted to participate in the study.

The interviews and surveys were carried out from November 28, 2017, to April 9, 2018, a period of about 4 months. Some of the filled out informed consent forms were returned by hand when they were completed, or through self-stamped envelopes. Others were returned electronically through my e-mail. Administrators returned their completed surveys electronically. One out of the three high schools that partner with College Based program returned their demographic survey while one out of the two high schools that partner with High school Based program that participated in the study returned their survey on demographics. The researcher interviewed the practitioners and students after receiving their informed consent forms. The researcher made use of audio recordings and notebook to gather data and information from administrators, councilors, and former students in the course of the interviews.

Administrative data and documents yielded useful information with regard to demographics. The research study generated data and valuable information from former students, and programs' practitioners. (a) In this research, students' knowledge, experience, perspective, attitudes and sentiment about the merits, challenges, outcomes of the programs as well as factors that promote equity and success of Black and low-income students were explored. (b) The views and perspectives of the practitioners-administrators and councilors generated valuable data regarding factors that promote equity and success of Black and low-income students in the dual enrollment programs. Both student and practitioner data were necessary because the perspectives of the practitioners without the view of the students would be empty of first-hand experiences of participants in the programs while the experiences of the students without the perspectives of the practitioners would be blind and shortsighted regarding the structure

and overall goal of the programs. Hence, both the knowledge and experiences of both the practitioners and students were desirable to make a balanced and informed interpretation, synthesis, and set of recommendations.

The researcher gathered information from interviewees through open-ended questions while using audio-recording and notebook for documentation. For example, a researcher who plans to interview students regarding their struggles in learning can structure the questions based on behaviors, feelings, and situations that elicit a response that get to the crux of the matter (Tomal, 2003). There were no matching of participants' responses with their names, as the researcher used de-identifiers such as A#1, A#2, A#3, A#4, A#5 and S#1, S#2, S#3, S#4, S#5 as key for practitioners and students respectively for documentation. Their responses appeared in data summaries. The real names of the participants did not appear in the survey or any other instrument of data collection and analysis.

Consequent upon the National Research Act of 1974, which created the codes for the protection of human subjects, the rights of the participants were protected. The researcher made use of the skills acquired in the course of one's studies such as listening skills, effective and clear communications, positive reinforcement, clarifying and summarizing, asking probing question, giving pause time, and redirecting in the course of the dialogue meetings (A guide for training..., 1998). The researcher fostered interconnectedness, respect for the dignity of the human person and differences not as problems to be overcome but as sources of strength to be explored through synthetic unity. The reflective dialogue circle, focus group interview, as well as the personal interviews conducted directly and through telephone offered the researcher greater opportunity to exercise and

practice the key facilitation skills learned and imbibed from one's studies at the epic level. Shorthand writing was quite helpful in getting a transcript of the discussion of the focus group and other participants. The use of positive reinforcement as well as summarizing helped to elicit more answers on the different questions and issues raised. When some of the participants wandered away from the question, the researcher used shifting focus to bring them back to the question. The researcher made use of pause time as it gave the participants a greater opportunity to reflect on their feelings and ideas that might be part of the problem. The researcher employed simple acknowledgment and positive reinforcement such as: "go on," "tell me more," "go ahead," "that is interesting," and so on to encourage meaningful responses.

3.1.5 Data Review and Interpretation Procedure

The study made use of simple descriptive interpretation to examine the findings gathered from the respondents. The analysis of the data was through simple descriptive interpretation seeking common (convergence) as well as specific/ unique experiences, and perspectives (divergence) from the respondents in the course of the findings to determine emerging themes. Conclusions and recommendations were based on evidence, which includes describing, synthesizing, and interpreting the data collected and turning them into meaningful, useful and accessible information (Developing an Effective Evaluation Plan, 2011). "The determination of what is credible is often context-dependent and can vary across programs and stakeholders" (Developing an Effective Evaluation Plan, 2011, p.25).

The researcher worked in close collaboration and in partnership with the stakeholders under the umbrella of "Underserved Student Dual Enrollment Initiative" (USDEI) who

assisted in the research and will be quite helpful in the implementation of its findings. USDEI included programs' administrators, teachers, counselors, social workers, students, parents and community group members. Other stakeholders included the dissertation chair, committee members, policymakers, and social justice advocates. Hence, the involvement of stakeholder workgroup members-Underserved Student Dual Enrollment Initiative (USDEI) was crucial in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data in light of cultural, the socio-political ecology of the programs and stakeholders' need. This is a way to ensure the credibility, usefulness and the application of the conclusions, design for action, and recommendations of the study. Finally, the findings were quite helpful in the design for action, recommendations for fiscal policy implications, and practical application for the professional development of educators.

CHAPTER 4: Design for Action

4.1.0 Evidence Collected and Monitored to Engage Stakeholders across School, Academy & Community

4.2.0 Research Findings

(A) Demographic Characteristics of the Dual Enrollment Programs' Participants

In ALPHA high school that partners with College Based program:

Table 4 Demographic characteristics of Alpha high school students in general and dual enrollment students in the 2017/ 2018

Race/Ethnicity	High Sch. Students	Percentage in HS	No in DE	Percentage in DE
White	625	62.6%	6	66.6%
African-Americans/Blacks	274	27.4%	1	11.1%
Asian/ Pacific Islander	3	0.3%	0	0%
Latino/a (Hispanics)	23	2.3%	0	0%
Native Americans	0	0%		
Others (Multiracial)	73	7.3%	2	22.2%
Total	998	100%	9	100%

Table 4 Demographic Characteristic of Alpha High School in General, and Dual Enrollment Students in 2017/2018.

(ii) The number of Alpha high school students participating in dual enrollment programs for the 2017/18 academic year who are on free or reduced lunch and those who are not.

Table 5 Alpha Dual Enrollment Students who are on Reduced/ Free Lunch and those not.

Total	Free/ Reduced lunch	Percentage	Those who are not	Percentage
9	5	55.5%	4	44.4%

Alpha Dual Enrollment students who are on Reduced/ Free Lunch and those not

Table 6 Proportion of Dual Enrollment Participation by Race/Ethnicity and Poverty Level in Alpha High School.



Race/ Ethnicity	Proportion of total dual Enrollment participation	Proportion of total Alpha high school enrollment
White	66.6%	62.6%
African-American/ Black	11.1%	27.4%
Others (Multicultural)	22.2%	7.3%
Poverty quartile	Proportion of total dual enrollment participation in Reduced/ Free Lunch	Proportion of total dual enrollment not in Reduced/ Free Lunch
Number	5/9	4/9
Percentage	55.5%	44.4%

Table 6 Proportion of Dual Enrollment at Participation by Race/ Ethnicity and Poverty Level in Alpha High School.

In the DELTA High School that partners with College in High School.

Table 7 Demographic characteristics of the Delta high school students in general and dual enrollment students in the 2017/ 2018

Race/Ethnicity	High Sch. Students	Percentage in HS	No in DE	Percentage in DE
White	1,090	90.5%	106	95.4%
African-Americans/Blacks	71	5.8%	2	1.8%
Asian/ Pacific Islander	17	1.4%	3	2.7%
Latino/a (Hispanics)	5	0.4%	0	0
Native Americans	0	0	0	0
Others (Multiracial)	21	1.7%	0	0
Total	1,204	100	111	100

Demographic characteristics of Delta High School in General and Dual Enrollment students in 2017/2018

Table 8 Delta Dual Enrollment students who are on Reduced/ Free Lunch and those not

Total	Free/ Reduced lunch	Percentage	Those who are not	Percentage
111	18	16.2%	93	83.7%

Delta Dual Enrollment students who are on Reduced/ Free Lunch and those not

Table 9 Proportion of Dual Enrollment Participation by Race/Ethnicity and Poverty Level in Delta High School.



Race/ Ethnicity	Proportion of total dual Enrollment participation	Proportion of total Delta high school enrollment
White	90.5%	95.4%
African-American/ Black	5.8%	1.8%
Asian/ Pacific Island	2.7%	2.7%
Poverty quartile	Proportion of total dual enrollment participation in Reduced/ Free Lunch	Proportion of total dual enrollment not in Reduced/ Free Lunch
Number	18/111	93/111
Percentage	16.2%	83.7%

Table 9 Proportion of total Dual Enrollment participation by Race/ Ethnicity And Poverty Level in Delta High School

Table 9 Proportion of total Dual Enrollment participation by Race/ Ethnicity And Poverty Level in Delta High School

Demographic data

The diversity of the student population participants in the dual enrollment programs using two high schools representing two universities in the Pittsburgh region of Southwestern Pennsylvania. At Alpha high school which partners with “College Based” program, findings indicate that while White students make up 63% of their entire student population, they participated at the rate of 67% in dual enrollment program of the school. While Black students make up 27% of the entire high school population at Alpha high school, they constitute only 11% of the dual enrollment participants from high school. With regard to socioeconomic status, while high-poverty level students constitute 56% of the participants at Alpha high school dual enrollment, the students with low-poverty level make up 44% of the participants at the same school.

In a similar manner, in Delta high school, while White students make up 91% of the entire high school, they constitute 95% of the students taking part in dual enrollment programs. Asian students made up 1% of the high school student population of the school, but are participating at 3% in dual enrollment programs of the school. While Black students make up 6% of the entire population of the Delta high school, they are participating only at 2%. Hence, while White students and Asian students are overrepresented in dual enrollment programs, the Black students remain underrepresented. In terms of the socio-economic matrix, in Delta high school while 84% of students from lower poverty level are participating, only 16% of students from high poverty level are participating.

Students

Personal Characteristics

The research presents the lived experiences of diverse student populations who were successful in the programs including their benefits and challenges to help facilitate an understanding and improvement of the dual enrollment programs. Four successful former students of the two dual enrollment programs participated in the interviews: Joseph who is 20 years old participated in dual enrollment at 19 years, Amanda who is 20 years old, participated at 17, Lucas who is 18 years old, and participated at 17, and Regina who is 24 years old and participated from the age 16. The average age of the former student research participants is about 20 years old and the average age of their initial participation in dual enrollment programs was around the age of 17 years. Most students who participated in the dual enrollment programs both at “High School Based” and “College Based” did so roughly at the age of 17. Of the four former students who were interviewed, three passed through High School Based program, while one passed through College Based one. The three former students of High School Based program include two male students and one female. The three former students of High School Based program include one White male, one White female and one Middle Eastern male who is an international student. One Black female student from “College Based” program participated in the interview. The three students who participated in “High School Based” programs are from lower poverty level families, while the Black female student who was from “College Based” program is from a high-poverty level family.

Regina (SCB#1) of College-Based Programs

CB#1: Personal Characteristics

Regina is a 24-year-old Black female who attended Greenhill high school. She was 16 years old when she enrolled in dual enrollment in the 11th grade while she was still in high school. She graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Secondary Education Mathematics. Currently, she is an assistant manager in a renowned car hiring company.

Recruitment and selection

She heard about dual enrollment in the 11th grade when the program started newly in their high school. It started initially with those in the senior year but they were told it would be available to those in the junior year the following semester. Regina did not go about looking for the program. She was told by her teacher:

“You are doing well in school. We have dual enrollment programs. I think you will be good at it” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

And the following semester she applied and was accepted into the program. According to her:

“The application process was not difficult to complete but it was just long” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Regina had to enlist the help of her sister who was already in college to fill out the application form. After the submission of the application, Regina waited to be told whether she was accepted. The Director of the program came to Greenhill high school and talked to all the students who were accepted into the program. Thereafter, it was really simple from there. She was given a semester, that is about three to four months to prepare and think about the program.

Motivations

She was bored in high school and wanted a more challenging course. She was motivated by her mother to participate in dual enrollment. Her Mom said to her: “Dual enrollment is good. You will get college credits.” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

She and her friends motivated each other. She reasons thus:

“There were other friends we hang out with each other. Obviously, you want good grades. If your friends are getting good grades, you want to get good grades” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Experiences in the program

When she entered the dual enrollment programs, initially, she was not focused. She thought she was still dealing with high school subjects. With time, she became more focused. She believes that the program helped to prepare her very well. She reflects on the differences between her instruction in the College Based program and in the high school classes thus:

“In the high school, you see the teacher every day and have one assignment you do every night. In college you have experience of real lecture, the professors have assignments that are due in weeks, and those sorts of things are different from my high school. So, you are taught like time management and how to prioritize, so those things definitely prepared me for college” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

She goes further to say:

“The difference is in the way you are treated. In high school, you are still treated like a kid. You are still like babysat, told exactly what to do and how to do it. Everything is

handed to you. You get to college. You are an adult. They tell you what to do. If you do it, you do it. If you do not do it. You are responsible for it” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Reflecting on whether she should have been more prepared, she states thus:

“I think it depends on how focused you are. Obviously, the first semester I was not focused and I guess I wasn’t well prepared thinking it was like high school blah-blah-blah. With time, I got it together” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

At Regent University, the dual enrollment students are not treated differently from other regular college students. You just get involved by being around. When there are college program and activities, the teacher tells everybody. She explained it thus:

“At Regent University, we were real college students. You are not excluded from anything. You can do whatever you want to do” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Programs’ Support Services

At Regent University, dual enrollment students are provided with counselors as well as mentors. She had a more positive experience with regard to her advisement. She states it thus:

“I had the same adviser when I matriculated as a full-time student as when I was in dual enrollment programs. I had my adviser for a very long time. I definitely used my adviser every semester” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Dual enrollment is a program that comes with some costs. Recounting on how the program was financed during her own period, she states:

“Our dual enrollment was financed for. It was already paid for and we were given cards for food. If you go over the amount in the card you had to pay for it. I think it was financed by both college and high school. We were ready to go. The only thing was you either get a good grade or you be kicked out” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Program’s Benefits

She declares that College Now met her expectation in these words:

“I expected it to be like college. I did not know exactly what college was going to be like and it was. It was a real college experience. It was everything college was and I was a high school kid. So, it met my expectations.” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

She attended College Based dual enrollment program for three semesters, earned 18 credits, and went to Regent University as a matriculated full-time student with 18 credits.

She described the benefits she derived from College Based program in these words:

“I had a positive college attitude and dual enrollment made me more prepared. Whenever I started college I was a semester ahead. Instead of having two classes as in College Based program, we had four or more classes. It definitely made me more prepared” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

She went further to add:

“It made my senior year really easy. Instead of a lot of classes as in my junior year, I had four or five classes the rest was study hall. One was cooking class and science was my major class” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

The college-based program offered her opportunity to make friends with both dual enrollment students as well as full-time matriculated students. She expresses it thus:

“We made friends among each other in College Based program, hang out together, play ping-pong, studied together, passed notes, and share notes. Then everything was good (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

When Regina became a full-time matriculated student at Regent University she was privileged to participate in mentoring programs. She seized on her personal experiences to be of good help to dual enrollment students. She recalls her experiences thus:

“Whenever I came to Regent University as a full-time student, I become a mentor for College Based dual enrollment students. When I became a junior, I was definitely a better mentor than I was mentored when I was in College Based program. I actually asked the students questions about student life to make sure everything was good” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

She definitely recommends dual enrolment for other Black students and students from low-income families.

Challenges

She presents her challenges thus:

“While everyone was there learning and doing their homework, you are constantly playing catch up from your own high school end. I will be at the University two days out of the week, Tuesday and Thursday. I will be at the high school on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. I was always playing catch up. I think that was my greatest difficulty” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

She claims that her high school teachers were sometimes not supportive because they felt you were not in class. But she reasons thus:

“I was not in class not because I went for a party or playing ping-pong but I went for college class” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

She asserts that she had a mentor but did not make real use of them. She met her once or twice but did not really talk with her. Recounting her experiences of mentorship she states:

“It was provided but I did not make use of it... My mentor was like if you wanna talk. No, I no wanna talk to you, so I never used them” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Joseph (SCH#1) of College in High School-Based Programs

Recruitment and Selection

Joseph is a 20-year-old White male mid-lower class freshman year student who attended Central-hill high school. He participated in High School Based dual enrollment programs when he was 19 and took Computer Science (CS 0007). He earned 3 credits from the dual enrollment programs. He came into Zenith University where he is majoring in Computer Science with 26 college credits including AP credits. He heard about dual enrollment first towards the end of the junior year in high school. He submits:

“The teacher who taught in High School Based dual enrollment course told me about it. I had no difficulty in completing the application process. I remember there was a form you had to fill out” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

Program support services

Joseph had the opportunity of receiving some support. He acknowledges it thus:

“Obviously, I received counseling for application to college while in College in High School 2 or 3 times per semester but as often as we wanted” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

Dual enrollment provided Joseph some opportunities to make new friends who supported him during his period in College in High School programs. He describes the relationship with his peers thus:

“The relation between me and my peers is that we were all students in an advanced class together. I have been in an advanced class for the entirety of my high school. Students tend to stick together. Computer science course would be different because it is not a requirement like a standard liberal course. People taking it are more in Math and science side of things. It is like the same bonding through fire while taking the course” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

The Structure of the Programs

Joseph finds the introduction to the project and the structure of the exams most helpful. He puts it thus:

“You are given an assignment for a couple of weeks and they are due in a couple of weeks, which is 2 to 3 weeks in advance to complete it. It has project and exam that happens twice in the semester. The structure was most helpful and it has absolutely helped me to cope with my college studies. It has helped in the better management of my time” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

Programs’ Benefits

Joseph’s major reasons for participating in High School Based dual enrollment programs was “...for school intellectual challenge and for college credits” (SCH#1,

Personal Interview, April 3, 2018). Joseph reflects on the benefits he derived from dual enrollment programs thus:

“I was very well prepared by Computer Science High School Based dual enrollment course. The course CS0007 is the ground level to introductory level to computer science course 401. 401 was designed for people who have done previous preparation course in CS0007 or any other course. I felt extremely well prepared as I was a semester ahead of everyone else.” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

Joseph’s application and participation in High School-Based programs had an influence on his choice of Zenith University for his full-time college education. He submits:

“Taking college in high school course and talking to my family I did not give much thought coming to Zenith University. It had an effect on my applying to Zenith University and the education I am getting here is better than anywhere else” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

Joseph goes further to say:

“Definitely, it was a good program. Having college credit is good if you can do it without incurring any or less financial cost...If you want to get out of the school in time and start working fast then College in High School-Based programs is the way to go” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

Continuing on the dividends he derived from the College in High School, Joseph states:

“It provided me the opportunity to study computer science above the level that was already offered by my high school. It provided me an opportunity to test my interest in majoring in Computer Science. It gave me college credit and a semester ahead of everyone else” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

Joseph has a future ambition of pursuing his studies at the epic level and giving back to society. He puts it this way:

“I am not sure but eventually in 10 years down the line when I get my Ph.D. in computer science, I will infinitesimally move the boundaries of human knowledge. I will start an organization to do electrical work that will benefit the community” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

Areas of Concern

Joseph had some questions about how the course he was doing would align with his would be major which could not be answered by his college in high school instructor. He says:

“My teacher in College in High school knows the content but did not know how it applies to my major Computer Science. The question was answered in my freshman year in college but would have been absolutely helpful had it been answered while I was in College in High School” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

He submits:

“I had some more theoretical and practical questions about how the course works and how it would fit into my major program that was answered by an adviser when I had enrolled in the University as a full-time student” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

He suggests:

“Just having a department or an adviser in arts and science in general from the University one can send an e-mail and get a reply in a week or two about the practicality of the

university bureaucracies would have been helpful” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

Amanda (SCH#2) of College in High School-Based Programs

Amanda is a 20-year-old White mid-low-income female who graduated from Crescent hill high school. She started dual enrollment in the 12th grade while she was 17 years old. She earned four credits of one class in Calculus in the senior year. She is now majoring in economics under the pre-dental track. Amanda heard about College in High School-Based programs in the 11th grade. A Math teacher from 12th grade told her that Calculus was one of the options they have in College in High School programs. She became interested in it, applied and was accepted. She heard about it in February and she started in September of the same year.

Motivations

Amanda knew she will be taking Calculus in college. So she decided to participate in College in High School because its Calculus class is taken over a long period of time from September to May instead of a semester. She reports: “What people would learn from September to December, we learned from September to May. I felt it is easier to get help in high school than it is in college. It definitely helped me to know the teacher and really helped prepare me for college” (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

The Structure of the programs

She took pre-calculus before taking Calculus in College in High school and it was difficult. So, she expected Calculus class in College in High school to be more difficult but she did not encounter any obstacle taking the classes. The College in High School

calculus was a more difficult course than the courses she took in high school. Though she took a lot of difficult classes in high school, the College in High School course was harder. She puts thus:

“The test was definitely harder than any of the other tests I had taken in high school. The high school classes and College in High School course were similar in structure in terms of how the teachers gave examples at the beginning, at the middle, the students did it alone and at the end of the class they check it together” (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

She says:

“I expected the College in High School to be more work than other classes I had taken, more work and more studies and that definitely was true” (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Program support services

She received tutoring from her high school even though she said it was optional. She says:

“I received a tutorial from my high school. I usually went 2 or 3 times a week for tutoring. The tutoring helped me in the program” (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Amanda found the cooperative studies she had with her peers in College in High school to be quite helpful. She adds:

“There were other students that took advanced classes and they were all Math driven. I had a couple of friends I associated with and we got along very well. Actually one of them is still my friend” (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Program's Benefits

Amanda derived a lot of benefits from her College in High School programs and expressed it thus:

“It gave me an idea about college tests; the level of difficulty and the amount of material one is expected to know for the exam. So when I came to the University as a full time matriculated student, I was more prepared for it” (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

She goes further to add:

“It definitely showed me how difficult college is. It did not really change my perception of college and which University to attend. I had always wanted to attend Zenith University and I am in the university” (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

She highly recommends dual enrollment for Black students and students from low-income families because it will give them an idea of what to expect when they get to college. She states thus:

“Definitely, I think it is a great opportunity as it gives you an idea of how college is going to be, and if you choose to go to college you already have an idea of what to expect. And in college in the first year, it is a little bit easier, and less stressful because you already have college credit coming in. That is definitely helpful in the first year” (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

LUCAS (SCH#3) of College in High School-Based Programs

Lucas is an 18-year-old male student of Middle Eastern descent who participated in College in High School-Based programs when he was 17 in the 12th grade. He passed through Pittsburgh hill academy. He described himself as middle lower income class student.

While Joseph and Amanda had some time to prepare for their dual enrollment programs since they were informed of the programs by February and started in September of the same year in the 12th grade. However, for Lucas, the period between the time he received the information and the time he started the program was very short. He had only about 2 to 3 months to prepare for the programs. Lucas heard about dual enrollment program in the 11th grade through a teacher and his peers. His biology teacher was his primary motivator. The teacher noticed that he was a scholar and she suggested to him thus: “It would be cool to have college credits while you were in the high school” (SCH#3, Personal Interview, April 17, 2018).

Motivations

Lucas has a lot of incentives that led him to attend College in High School-Based programs. He surmised his incentives into three things:

“First, I wanted to get a head start in college. Second, I was interested in Chemistry and wanted more rigorous coursework. Third, I wanted to keep up with my peers and to remain competitive” (SCH#3, Personal Interview, April 17, 2018).

Areas of Concern

Lucas participated in College in High School Chemistry and found it hard to meet the pre-requisite within the limited amount of time he had to meet the requirements. It

was through the dent of his hard work, diligence and putting in extra-time he was able to make it through the pre-requisite and participated in College in High School-Based programs. He describes his effort thus:

“I am a very dynamic person. While other students will like to go home to play games and talk to friends, I like to be creative. I believe it was the motivation that made me study in the US and I have more family ties and orientation than average peers in my school” (SCH#3, Personal Interview, April 17, 2018).

Lucas found the application to College in High School-Based programs to be smooth sailing but for the cost. He said:

“I found the application process very straightforward but the monetary aspect was a little difficult” (SCH#3, Personal Interview, April 17, 2018).

He relied very much on his mother for inspiration and financial support. He acknowledges the hard work of his mom in getting him to study in the US. His father who is a civil engineer has a significant influence on him in terms of his creativity and design.

Benefits

Lucas received some financial Aid offered for the program through his school. He was mentored by her teacher in the program and relied on her even as he had gone on for full-time college and while doing Chemistry 2. While in College in High School-Based programs, he received mentoring once in every 2 to 3 weeks. College in High School Based programs did not affect his decision to attend college as he had always nursed the ambition to go to college. However, what the program did was to prepare him better for

college. The program exceeded his expectation. Lucas acknowledges the benefit he derived from College in High School thus:

“It helped me learn how to study better and become good at time management. I acquired a better and stronger knowledge of Chemistry. It was a small class but became very important in terms of the understanding grading system and the environment” (SCH#3, Personal Interview, April 17, 2018).

Challenges

Lucas acknowledges his challenges thus:

“However, college pace was fast, while I was in College in High school Based Chemistry I was taking physics in high school classes as well which was overwhelming to me. So, the College in High School Based program is different from high school in terms of fast pace, more freedom and grading system” (SCH#3, Personal Interview, April 17, 2018).

He went further to add:

“At College in High School-Based programs, free things went away, grading was high and dependent on the exam and you have to get better at time management. The program was more challenging at the beginning than I had thought. I thought it was like inside my high school. I did not think of the lab experiment and studying outside my high school. It exceeded my expectation” (SCH#3, Personal Interview, April 17, 2018).

He notes the differences between high school and College in High School-Based programs in these words:

“In high school, the teacher gives you assignments which you do regularly but in College in High School the test is bigger and more challenging, and you are given some weeks to prepare. In the College in High School Based program, you have to make yourself known

to the professor and the grading is different” (SCH#3, Personal Interview, April 17, 2018).

Lucas believes that the majority of those who were in the class had more difficulty in the Course than those who registered it for College in High School programs as well. He explained it thus:

“This is because, those in College in High School-Based programs studied outside the class and got along better with each other” (SCH#3, Personal Interview, April 17, 2018).

Administrators, Councilors, and Students

4.2.1 Theme One: Broad-based Access

Broad access is the key. Most of the high schools disseminate information to all the students as part of their scheduling process and make the opportunity available to all the students. The councilors, administrators, and teachers at the participating high schools recruit students for Regent University as well as Zenith University. The recruitment for the universities and colleges are done at the high school level. The opportunity to participate in dual enrollment programs is open to all high school students who are in 11th and 12th grades. Regent University makes use of brochures, fliers, parents’ night outreach program and website to market the programs to high school students. Zenith University makes use of brochure, downloadable materials and parents’ night outreach to market the program to the high school students. Zenith University also makes the program information available to students via Facebook and Twitter. While at the Regent University the Director has the final say of who comes into the program after the high school has selected a student, at the Zenith University it the liaison officers who have the final say of who comes into the program.

While all the high schools agreed that the information for dual enrollment should be made available to all the students, there are variances among different high schools regarding when students should hear about dual enrollment programs. Practitioners' views on when a student is informed of the dual enrollment program range from 8th grade to 10th grade. For examples, the information about dual enrollment is disseminated by February to 10th graders at Alpha and Gamma high schools, and to 8th graders coming into 9th grade at Beta, Cipher and Delta high schools.

Most of the student interviewees say they heard about the program in their 11th grade. The students interviewed are not necessarily from the same high schools as the practitioners, but they passed either through "College Based" or "College in High School Based" programs. Most students who participated in dual enrollment programs both in College Based as well as in College in High School-Based programs did so roughly around the age of 17. The three former students of College in High School-Based programs learned about their dual enrollment at the 11th-grade year and participated in the 12th-grade year. One former student of College-Based programs learned of dual enrollment in the 11th-grade year and started participating in the second semester of the 11th grade. Regina heard about dual enrollment in the 11th grade and participated in the second semester of the same academic year. Meanwhile, she opined that students should hear about the programs earlier on when they enter high school.

Though Lucas heard about dual enrollment programs in the 11th grade, he opines that students should hear about it in the 10th grade and participate in it by the 11th grade. He knows a couple of the students who are participating in the programs in their 11th grade currently. While acknowledging the argument that participating in College in High

School-Based programs in the 12th grade has the immediate propensity to prepare a student for college, he acknowledged that not participating in the 11th grade could make students forget a lot of things they learned earlier on in Biology, Chemistry, and other subjects.

Students Selection and Recruitment

All three high schools (Alpha, Beta and Cipher) that partner with College Based programs as well as both of the high schools Delta and Gamma that partner with College in High School-Based programs are open to diversity as they do not discriminate on who comes into the program based on color, race, or socio-economic status.

However, the targeted students in both College Based and College in High School-Based programs remain optimal students. For College Based, it is for the students who have “the motivation and are well prepared academically” (CCB#2, Personal Interview, February 6, 2018). At Alpha high school that partners with College Based, dual enrollment is for “family, gifted students and students who have met academic criteria and have the desire to take the classes and to earn college credits” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 17, 2018).

For Beta high school that partners with College Based, it is for “self-motivated students who can maintain some balance between the high school and college academic work” (CCB#2, Personal Interview, February 6, 2018).

Disney (CCN#2) of Beta high school says:

“They are selected based on merit. They have to meet our GPA requirement, attendance requirement and discipline requirement to be able to participate. We require them to have

a 3.0 GPA. It is based on their GPA, interest, attendance and discipline requirements” (CCB#2, Personal Interview, February 6, 2018).

At Cipher high school, it is for students who have superior academic grade performance. Though College Now accepts 3:0 GPA and above, Cipher high school prefer 3.4 GPA as their gold standard. Practitioners especially councilors express the wishful thinking for the opportunity to be made available to more students. For instance, Desirae (CCB#3) of Cipher high school articulates her fantasy for broad access to dual enrollment thus:

“For me, I wish it can be something that every high school students can experience because it is teaching you how to have balance in your life, and you have to be able to manage your time” (CCB#3 Personal Interview, February 21, 2018).

Tim wishes thus:

“Well, I will like to see more kids take advantage of it. I also understand that sometimes the monetary constraint is there. I wish if they can come up with funding from somewhere to help out the students in the low-income level. That will promote it more and more and make them take online classes” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

College in High School Based program has deferred to various school districts and high schools the power to select and admit dual enrollment students based on academic records and prerequisite courses completed. Students in College in High School programs have common as well as differing characteristics based on their school district areas. However, the students who participate in College in High School programs are approved

the same way AP and honors students are approved based on academic records and meeting the course prerequisites.

Delta high school that partners with College in High School-Based programs demand an enrollment in a corresponding high school subject before enrolling a candidate into College in High School course.

Philo (CCH#2) of Gamma high school that partners with College in High School made it clear that for a student to participate in dual enrollment the followings are required:

“First, interest, second, 3:0 GPA and above; and third, teacher recommendation” (CCH#2, Personal Interview, April 9, 2018).

The councilors, administrators, and teachers at the participating high schools recruit students for the Regent University as well as the Zenith University. Meanwhile, almost all the former students made it clear that it was not the general announcement and information that made them participate but rather significant others both familial, non-familial members, and institutional agents that motivated them.

For Joseph, it was the teacher who taught Computer course in College in High School and his family who has been encouraging him all along to go for challenging courses in general (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

As for Amanda, it was the Mathematics teacher who taught the 12 graders and her father who supported and paid for everything for her (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

With regard to Lucas, it was a biology teacher, a chemistry teacher, his peers, and his mother with the cooperation of his father who paid and made it possible for him to study

Chemistry in the U.S. The biology teacher was his primary motivator, and his College in High School instructor remains his adviser even as he has become a full-time college student in Chemistry at Zenith University. The biology teacher noticed that he was a scholar, and admonished him that it will be cool to have college credits while in high school (SCH#3, Personal Interview, April 17, 2018).

When it comes to Regina, it was through the motivation and validation of her teacher, her mother, her sister, and her peers. It was the teacher who said to her: “You are doing well in school. We have a dual enrollment program. I think you will be good at it.” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

It was her mother who said:

“Dual enrollment is good. You will get college credits” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

It was her sister who helped to fill out the very long application process. It was her peers who were doing well academically and motivated her to remain competitive. So, though the various modes of disseminating dual enrollment information to reach students are very important, they are not sufficient. The most vital ones that made a difference was the validating human agents of teachers, counselors, administrators, family members, and peers.

Offering varieties of Options and Opportunities and their Barriers

Cipher high school that partners with Regent University offer a variety of options and opportunities to the high school students. At Cipher high school, a student who does not measure up to their set 3.4 GPA is not ruled out of the dual enrollment programs

completely. But they have to prove themselves by attending City College first and thereafter could be transitioned into Regent University. Desirae reiterates:

“Like I said we use City College which is a college as well. We do like a trial with them over there to see how they manage their time and to see if they can keep up with the regular event. It is just like an opportunity for them to prove it to us. For the next semester, we can transition them over there at Regent University. So, we don’t take the opportunity away from anyone. We just need them to show it to us. An action is not a word” (CCB#3 Personal Interview, February 27, 2018).

She describes the options thus:

“So, those who do not fit into the Regent University GPA can go to a City College to attempt to get credit there as well. So, we have different options here and we are working to expand that more” (CCB#3 Personal Interview, February 27, 2018).

She goes further to say:

“For some of our students, they cheer. They play basketball. They are in high school. They want to have a social life. They have a job and they are doing this dual enrollment” (CCB#3 Personal Interview, February 21, 2018).

She adds:

“So, they are seeing the workload before they even get to college. So, the little bit of stress that they feel, that overwhelming feeling that they feel in high school because they are in college does make sense to me to get them really prepared. Like we are college and career readiness school, let’s get you the exposure we can get you. So you know that this summer, I have to get it together because I have to manage my time” (CCB#3 Personal Interview, February 21, 2018).

At Gamma high school that partners with College in High School programs, Philo (CCH#2) expresses the difficulty of expanding their options thus:

“We have been identifying other courses that might qualify for College in High School. We will like to increase the number of College in High School course that we offer for our students. We run into the financial barrier. We often run into not being sure if the teachers would be approved to teach it. What the qualifications are?” (CCH#2, Individual Interview, April 9, 2018).

She adds:

“Zenith University has been good at working with us. In some colleges, the teacher has to have a Master's degree in a certain area, for some other colleges, there is some flexibility in so far as they have experience and have taught AP classes and something like that. So, we have some trouble being a small school identifying some more places where we could incorporate College in High School a little more” (CCH#2, Individual Interview, April 9, 2018).

4.2.2 Theme Two: Adequate Prior Preparation

The application process was not a major problem as the students find the application process smooth sailing. The students that participated in both College Based and College in High School-Based programs found the application processes easy to fill out and received their admission letters in a timely manner. However, a student who applied with College Based programs pointed out that the application process was very long, while a student who applied to College in High School-Based programs pointed out that the monetary aspect was a little bit difficult for him. Once the students have been recruited to participate in dual enrollment programs, adequate preparation for the students and their

parents become necessary as it is a new experience which is quite different from what they are used to.

At Alpha high school, there is nothing that they do in particular to prepare students for dual enrollment but they see it as important. In a similar manner, Beta high school does not seem to do anything, in particular, to prepare the students for dual enrollment programs but opines the College Based program offers the students a mini-orientation. Cipher High school has a process of preparing their students for college and career readiness that is worthwhile which could be tailored more to suit prospective participants in dual enrollment programs.

College in High School programs entrust the partnering school districts and high school teachers with the responsibility of preparing students for college-level coursework. Zenith University offers college skill course and after high school learning and encourages the partnering high schools to do the same. Jane (ACH#2) puts it eloquently thus:

“We offer college skill course and after high school learning. We have two of them that are offered here on campus and we encourage schools to offer them” (ACH#2, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

4.2.3 Theme Three: Enhanced and Rigorous Curriculum

Course Offerings at College-Based Programs

The program is called dual enrollment because a single college course counts both as a college course to be used toward college graduation as well as a high school diploma. Don (ACB#2) articulates it this way:

“The courses they take at the college level count toward high school graduation while at the same time being bona fide college credit” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

At Regent University, the students take various courses. Destiny (ACB#1) expresses it thus:

“There are students enrolled in accounting, English composition, criminal justice, arts and etc. There is a list of 100 level courses that ensure students’ success. I believe the courses are transferable to other institutions” (ACB#1 Personal Interview, November 28, 2017).

Don (ACB#2) says the types and quality of the courses offered to dual enrollment students as follows:

“We encourage the students to take what we call core courses. And I will use English composition as an example that is required by almost every University regardless of what the student major is. So, if they come in the first semester of the 11th grade or in the 12th grade, you can be pretty guaranteed that they will take core courses such as English Composition, Introductory History, College Algebra, Government, World Cultures and courses like that” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

The longer students stay in the program, depending on how many semesters they have been involved, they will have leeway to pick the course of their choice. Don explains:

“So, they may take a 200 level or even a 300 level course on occasion. But the course they will take is always determined by whether they meet the prerequisite” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

At Alpha high school, Dynasty (CCB#1) recalls that the dual enrollment students take the following courses among others. She expresses it thus:

“Often times they take social studies, sometimes they take a history class and math. I have had students who have taken Arabic, French and other classes we do not offer here. It will be in place of the class they won’t take here. Sometimes, I have students taking classes in piano. This semester I have some students taking a science class. So depending on what their interests are, it can be core classes or it can be elective” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 17, 2018).

Alpha high school somewhat discourages their students from taking English at College Based program because they want their students to meet the English requirement at their high school, and because of other issues that are being taught in English class. She reiterates:

“English is the only one we try to avoid. They can pick English if they will like to, but it will count as elective for us but it wouldn’t count as core English course” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 17, 2018).

Alpha high school gives students one credit per class as they do not go into the university system of three credits or four credit per course. This is the way Alpha high school counts the course taken at dual enrollment programs. Dynasty says:

“And if those can count toward their core class, we do count them at AP weight. We do count that into QPA. What we do not count them into is the class rank. We can’t give those students advantage over the students who are taking classes here” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 17, 2018).

At Beta high school, Disney submits that dual enrollment students of the high school have these college courses among others. She articulates it thus:

“They take a variety of courses. They have the opportunity to take any entry-level classes that they want such as Intro to Psychology, Intro to Sociology, English, Algebra, Criminal Justice, Computer Science, and Biology just to say a few. It depends on what their interest is, what they want to do” (CCB#2, Personal Interview, February 6, 2018).

Course Offerings in College in High School Programs

College in High School Based program offers many courses and partners with numerous high schools. Tom (ACH#1) says:

“We have over 30 courses and 130 participating high schools” (ACH#1, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

This is what course offering looks like in Delta high school that partners with Zenith University. Tim (CCH#1) says:

“Right now we are offering through Zenith University AP calculus, applied statistics, Web page design, AP Civic C, French 3 and honor French 4” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

He goes further to add:

“And we use to have quite a few class through City College. But City College made a rule that in order for our teachers to teach those classes and issue credits for those classes they are to have a doctoral level degree in order to teach it. And so we had a bunch of classes and we don’t have teachers with doctorates to teach those classes with City College. But our students are still able to go to City College to take those classes” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Meanwhile, whether students take the AP classes or not, college classes or not, it is the content of the class that is determinant since they are expected to meet the prerequisite in order to get into College in High School-Based programs. Tim of Delta high school explains it thus:

“For example, AP calculus class, they would have had pre-calculus class in order to get to the class. Of course, if they want to take advantage of the classes whether high school course or AP class they can. In some cases, there are no preparations ahead of time or pre-requisites that must be met in prior years in order to get to these courses in the first place” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

He claims that there is no more advantage for the students who take the College in High School class, and the ones that decide not to take College in High School class as the curriculum taught is the same for all the students (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Delta high school could have 2 or 3 different teachers teaching the World Culture classes with variances in the way they teach it but the content should be the same for all the students as they are expected to cover the same materials for all the students (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018). He goes on to explain it this way:

“Let say the World Culture class, for example, more 11th graders take it. We might have 1/3 of our high school students take advantage of the class (College in High School program) but 100% of students are taught the same exact curriculum. They get 1 credit for World Culture but sometimes they take advantage of Dual Enrollment opportunity. They get one credit through school transcript and 3 credits through the university” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Course Content that was taken by Respondent Students

The four student interviewees went to college with some college credits. While Joseph, Amanda, and Lucas went to Zenith University. Regina went to Regent University. Regina participated for three semesters in College Based programs and went to college with 18 college credits. The college credits made from College Based were instrumental in preparing Regina for her major in Secondary Education Mathematics and she now functions as an assistant manager in a reputable car hiring company. Joseph went to college with 26 college credits in which 3 credits came from College in High School Computer Science while others came from his AP classes. The college credits earned from College in High School-Based programs prepared Joseph for his major in Computer Science, and Amanda for her major in Economics under the pre-dental track, and Lucas for his major in Chemistry. Amanda went to college with four credits from College in High School Calculus. Lucas went to college with 4 credits coming from Chemistry 1 course. 100% of the former four student interviewees felt extremely well prepared for college by the dual enrollment course works they took while in high school.

The former students attest to the rigor of coursework they did both at College Based as well as College in High School-Based programs. So, the location of the site of the program did not in any way affect the rigor and the enhancement of the curriculum. They all felt extremely well prepared by the college courses they took while in the dual enrollment programs.

Joseph found his College in High School Computer Science as “rigorous college course” work (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

Amanda found her Calculus college course “more difficult” than any difficult classes he had taken in her high school and the tests “harder than any test she had taken in high school” (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018). She expected the College in High School to be more work than other classes she had taken, and more studies and so it was.

Regina specified that College Based, met her expectation in these words:

“I expected it to be like college. I did not know exactly what college was going to be like and it was. It was a real college experience. It was everything college was and I was a high school kid. So, it met my expectations” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

4.2.4 Theme Four: Academic Support

There is a need for a comprehensive support system. It has often been argued that dual enrollment programs are college-level coursework and therefore should admit only high achieving students. The findings indicate that even students who were admitted based on their high academic achievement found it still hard and when they were supported they became successful.

For example, Amanda found her Calculus harder, more work than she had ever done previously. For Lucas, it was a difficult experience navigating his Chemistry college course while at the same time taking his Physics high school class. Initially, for both Lucas and Regina in their first semester, they were not focused; thinking they were still in the high school classes. And they faltered. They were supported. They became focused and got it together and were put on the track.

College-Based Programs of Regent University

The College-Based program pays attention to the academic performance of the students who are participating in the dual enrollment programs. Destiny expresses it thus:

“We do provide student support. A tutorial is available to all the university students, and dual enrollment students are no exception. We find out that some students were not doing well in English classes. We identified the students who were having a problem in English classes. We directed them to the Student Success Center as a safeguard” (ACB#1 Personal Interview, November 28, 2017).

It takes combine efforts of Beta high school and Regent University to elevate struggling students in dual enrollment programs. Disney says:
“They refer them to us when they are struggling. They also go to the tutoring center at the college. Their maturity, motivation and time management get better. Sometimes, they are overwhelmed” (CCB#2, Personal Interview, February 6, 2018).

The input of Regent University in giving individualized attention to struggling students is well acknowledged by Desirae when she says:
“When the students are having difficulty catching up, College Now program refers them to college tutoring center as well as alert Cipher high school” (CCB#3 Personal Interview, February 21, 2018).

She reiterates:

“And Regent University is great. They devise the plan to get our students extra tutoring for the writing skills. So, they go to class and then right after the class they will have a tutoring section to get them squared away to be more prepared for the class. So, Regent University is great because they really accommodate you and work with you. It is pretty incredible in making you do well in the course” (CCB#3, Personal Interview, February 21, 2018).

At Cipher high school that partners with Regent University the issue of counseling students has pride of place. Desirae admits:

“And I am going, to be honest with you sometimes our students fail. They know that feeling of not being able to withdraw from the class because they missed the drop period. Right” (CCB#3 Personal Interview, February 21, 2018).

She goes further to add:

“So we then give them the realistic outlook. Listen we just lost. This is an estimate, \$4000 because you failed, and you want to withdraw. So you really need to buckle down and plan yourself on how to get that grade up. Talk to your Professors. So really just I guess holding their hands to be able to let it go whenever they graduate. And they are a little more prepared” (CCB#3 Personal Interview, February 21, 2018).

At Cipher high school, supporting a struggling student takes a team effort and a team approach from various agents both at college and high school. Desirae puts it thus:

“So, every instance of collaborating with the colleges, with the administrators, with myself (counselor), with the students and with their parents is like a five-headed course to get everyone on the same page. If a student starts to slip we get in touch with the college. We get them set up for tutoring at the college level” (CCB#3 Personal Interview, February 21, 2018).

She adds:

“We get them set up with something similar to a study hall called CRU here. We get them set up with an English teacher if they are struggling in English. We get them set up with a Math teacher if they are struggling in Math. They also have the opportunity to come in early before school, and the opportunity to stay late after school as well. We

have a lot of interventions set in place and a lot of safety nets as well because we don't want to waste our school money. We want them to be successful" (CCB#3 Personal Interview, February 21, 2018).

College in High School Based programs of Zenith University

The Guidance-Councilors in Delta high school as well as Gamma high school help to recruit the students into dual enrollment programs as well as coordinate the activities of tutoring them to ensure that College in High School student does not slip through the cracks.

At Delta high school, teachers make available some time during the week to assist students who are struggling with anything. Tim articulates it thus:

"All our teachers from Tuesday in the afternoon until Tuesday by 5 p.m. have some time built into our schedule. A couple of days in the week we used to have professional development things but probably 3 days a week they are available after school to invite students who are struggling with anything. Also, if they have a duty or study hall or something that matches student free time they can offer help at that point in time. There is help from the teachers to the students and they can coordinate their schedule" (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

The Guidance-Councilors do help in the coordination of peer coaching but it is ultimately the teachers who are aware of those who are taking advantage of that or not. He says:

"As for the Guidance-Counselor, we are out of the loop on that because they give them names of private tutors if there is a private tutor in the subject area and we also help

coordinate tutoring program with students who are in AP” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018). He goes further to add:

“So we have lists of gifted kids in different subject areas who are willing to help in one time that they are available to help. We can coordinate that between the struggling students and the student that is providing the tutoring. We are a kind of out of the picture on this via any coordination or application of who is taking advantage of that or not. All that happen directly between the teacher and the students” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

He maintains:

“The College collaborate a great deal with the teacher that is administering the classes so he has access to speak with the people who also provide that classes in the university and he communicates with them about the grades and things like that. As far as my end, I communicate mostly about the payment, and kids are registered and things like that. So, a lot of communication happens with the teacher” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

The students who take College in High School classes do have additional support from teachers who teach Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) students. Gamma high school has a teacher who works with Gifted and Talented Education students. And she checks with dual enrollment students to see how they are doing in their College in High School classes, and in case they need any kind of additional support.

Though dual enrollment programs are provided by various universities to meet the needs of underserved students, some challenges remain. Philo of Gamma high school believes more often than not the students who participate in dual enrollment programs have been

in advance program or honor course which kind of prepare them for college-level course program.

Philo maintains thus:

“The Gifted and Talented Education teacher helps coordinate with that... As I said before the students are more of those who have been in honor classes and have had more challenging coursework before to help prepare them” (CCH#2, Personal Interview, April 9, 2018).

Further, Philo adds:

“I don’t know if there are some specific strategies but we do offer to tutor after school on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Our students walk up, they don’t pick the buses. They have the opportunity to meet with the teachers after classes on Tuesday, and Wednesday for extra-support if they need it” (CCH#2, Personal Interview, April 9, 2018).

4.2.5. Theme Five: Psycho-social Support: Councilors, and Mentors

The importance of academic as well as psycho-social supports cannot be over-emphasized. According to Don, College Based program of Regent University accounts for supporting the dual enrollment students thus:

“First, mentoring where they are assigned college students to be their mentors. Second, is academic tutoring. We have undergraduate students who have access to university tutoring. And our dual enrollment students regularly take advantage of the tutoring. Third, the academic advisor” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

Don adds: “I serve as the academic adviser for all the College Based dual enrollment students. This year I also have a graduate assistant and two of us are listed on their transcripts as their academic advisers” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

He goes further to elaborate on the issue thus:

“And we meet with the students typically two or three times per term to find out how they are doing, whether they are encountering a problem, how they feel about themselves as college students. They get academic adviser that any other college student gets and in addition, they get an additional adviser that is tailored to the fact that they are high school students and college students at the same time” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

Don affirms the support system thus:

“We do have orientation program. And we have a mentoring program also” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

College-Based program of Regent University does not just recruit the students to participate in the programs but they also offer them some support to succeed. Disney states: “It is to ensure that the students are supported, provided information and guidance, and to ensure their success. I work with the counselors to see that the students are supported. I look at them as partners in students’ success. After their mid-term assessment or exam, I provide the career counselors at the high schools with up to date results from here at the university where the students are taking classes” (ACB#1 Personal Interview, November 28, 2017).

At Alpha high school that partners with Regent University, dual enrollment students have a closer relationship with their counselors than other non-dual enrollment high school students of the same school. Dynasty puts it thus:

“But if a student is struggling at College Now we kind of pool them back here. I know that the Director reaches out to them” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 15, 2018).

She goes on to add:

“So, they check in with me too often, any concern, any issue they have. So, I have a more direct relationship with that group of students who are attending College Now. So in addition, we divide students alphabetically to have the initial counselor that they work with, and they are also able to have that connection with me as a Regent University liaison” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 15, 2018).

At Beta high school, it takes a collaborative team to get dual enrollment students going.

Disney states:

“Usually it is I who is the counselor or college and career counselor here who meet with the advisers regarding dual enrollment programs. We work together to help students select and fill up classes. We work together if students are struggling and need extra-support, getting them enrolled and all that stuff” (CCB#2, Personal Interview, February 6, 2018).

At Cipher high school the Black students and students from low-income families are assisted by making the opportunity to participate in dual enrollment programs available to all the students. Desirae comments:

“Just giving them the extra-opportunity they may not have gotten. Our high school is a smaller school. In my opinion, we have a closer relationship and rapport with our students. We can have those tough conversations or beneficial conversations. You fit these criteria, would you like the opportunity to take the next step and be a dual

enrollment student by managing your time and by being in college and high school at the same time. Just because we are lower socio-economic school, I think that is a privilege to anyone regardless of their socio-economic status” (CCB#3 Personal Interview, February 27, 2018).

Peer Support and Encouragement

The mutual support, and encouragement of peers in navigating the challenges of dual enrollment cannot be over-emphasized. Joseph states:

“The relation between me and my peers is that we were all students in advance class together. I have been in advance class for the entirety of my high school. Students tend to stick together. Computer science course would be different because it is not a requirement like a standard liberal course. People taking it are more in Math and science side of things. It is like the same bonding through fire while taking the course” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

Amanda submits:

“I had a couple of friends I associated with and we got along very well. Actually one of them is still my friend” (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Regina had the opportunity of making friends not only with her peers but also with full time matriculated college students. She points out:

“We made friends among each other in College Now, hang out together, played ping-pong, studied together, passed notes, and share notes. Then everything was good. But now we don’t talk to each other often expect in Facebook where we randomly met and talk every now and then. I feel I am pretty like for the lack of better words, self-motivated and independent.” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

4.2.6 Theme Six: Costs and Financial Supports

The reality is that most Black students and students from low-income families need academic, psycho-social, as well as financial support in order to access, persist and succeed in dual enrollment programs. The cost of taking one college course which could count as 3 or 4 credits depending on course and college is very high. It could be as much as \$2100 or higher. Hence, it can be exorbitant for many Black students and students from low-income families. The University programs are doing something to mitigate the effects of this cost on participating students.

College-Based programs of Regent University

Don describes what they are doing this way:

“The real cost of these courses is much higher than the \$200. So, the University has to make up that amount by going into its scholarship reserve, so that is not sent to the student or the student’s high school. There is a contribution that is being made by the University for every Course and every student involved in the College-Based program. And it is substantial. It is hundreds of dollars that have to be made up for each course and the University uses its financial Aid resources to make up that difference” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

At Alpha high school, the students or their parents have to pay for the reduced tuition. It is their responsibility to foot the bill. Dynasty has this to say as regards footing the fees:

“Well, the students pay for the tuition. The students are responsible for their tuition. It is \$200 per course plus possibly some books cost. But that \$200 includes all other fees, so it is a huge discount from normal college cost. The district has been paying for the cost of

the van and transportation. And so the students do not incur any cost for that” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 15, 2018).

She feels that the fees that students pay do keep them a little more accountable. She opines: “It keeps all the students more accountable that they have to go to class and not attend because they have something else going on. I think that kind of knowledge hold them a little more accountable” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 15, 2018).

She argues:

“They may not attend. We see that a lot with the students often times when they get a fee waiver with the SAT and we see a much higher rate of students who wouldn’t show up. And when we discuss it with them afterward: But we wanted you to come, why didn’t you come? Not that they have any valid excuse with that but they did not lose any money for that so they won’t estimate that” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 15, 2018).

Disney of Beta high school and Desirae of Cipher high school indicate that their participating students do not pay anything out of their pocket for their dual enrollment programs. The administrative office of their school districts takes care of the tuition and other bills associated with their students participating in the programs. At Beta high school, Disney submits:

“We pay for it. Our school pays for the courses. The school that we participate with gives us a great discount and we pay for it. The student does not pay anything out of their pocket” (CCB#2, Personal Interview, February 6, 2018).

At Cipher high school the students attend dual enrollment programs free of charge. Desirae states:

“We get the students registered, and whatever the bill is, it is sent to our administrative office and they handle the bill completely. The family does not even see it. So I couldn’t even tell you how much it really is. The school completely funds the entire thing” (CCB#3, Personal Interview, February 21, 2018).

College in High School of Zenith University

At College in High School programs of Zenith University, dual enrollment programs have some costs associated with it. Tom puts it this way:

“Most of our courses are \$245. There is the one credit \$85-course class and \$320 Chemistry class. Our office budget for the tuition cost. Some things that we pay for including meeting with the teachers, our professors for coordinating the classes, our staff, and our professional development. The university does not need to subsidize for the courses because we have over 3000 students and 130 participating high schools, so we are able to completely fund our department” (ACH#1, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

College in High School programs of Zenith University provides tuition discount for their students also. Tom states:

“If a student is in a free or reduced lunch, the school needs to provide a letter in that way we collaborate financially to give a discount and the school district pays the remainder” (ACH#1, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

He adds:

“We do offer a reduction in tuition. There is a school in the urban neighborhood here in Pittsburgh, the social work department of the University covered their tuition. They paid for their history class” (ACH#1, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

Jane corroborates:

“The University School of Social work covered the tuition cost for a school that serves the underserved students. They paid for their history class last year” (ACH#2, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

At Delta high school, Tim submits:

“We cannot give financial break to anybody. The school does not have a budget to provide financial assistance to it. Any of these programs and any of these opportunities are around \$200 per course which is very reasonable. The same course, if it were in college, will be from \$1500 to \$1800 to take the same course. So, it is already a cost saving. And so, unfortunately, we don’t have any program or funding to help students of low-income or minority or anything like that” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Tim makes it clear that no one is discriminated against with regard to taking the course regardless of one's ethnicity, or color of skin or backgrounds. He reiterates:

“But again, unfortunately, we cannot help out monetarily for the students who do not have the means other students may have. The parents have to pay for any of these opportunities” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

He goes further to recall what used to be as follows:

“I know quite a while ago through City College, they had grant and funding available where they were offering these classes for free or almost free for our students. But that went away probably 8 or 9 years ago. It has been quite a while they had the money available and their budget too to offer a class for free” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Though offering college classes at \$200 to \$250 for high school students is a big discount, some people still think that it is kind of expensive for this kind of opportunity.

But Tim explains it analogically this way:

“You pay for car insurance all the time and you complain how much you pay for car insurance. The day you get into that first accident. At the end of that first accident you have to pay your \$500 deductible and the rest of it comes from the insurance. And you are glad that you have insurance. So, in this situation when you pay \$200 for high school classes, and if your University down the road accepts that with up to 15 to 21 credits of college in high school opportunities. You save yourself half your tuition. You are happy at that point. And we explain to kids and their parents when we talk to them about these opportunities” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

On the other hand, Philo indicates that there is a cost associated with participating in these dual enrollment programs which are not affordable to many of their students. The only class Gamma high school does with College in High School is American Politics. So, what Gamma high school does is to have most of the students apply for a discount with Zenith University which is helpful even though it does not cover the entire amount. However, if a student earns A or B in a course, the district picks up the remaining cost of the course. If not the student has to cover the remainder after discount. She explains:

“There is a cost with the class which is a huge problem with our students because we have a high percentage of the students who are receiving free and reduced lunch. In fact, 100% of our students receive free and reduced lunch. So the cost of the classes can be a deterrent to the students” (CCH#2, Personal Interview, April 9, 2018).

Philo adds:

“We do College in High School with other University beside Zenith University. And the other University we work with is able to provide a full scholarship to most of our students if they qualify each year for the dual enrollment class. Zenith University has not been able to do that, but they have been able to cover some of the cost of the classes. So that can be a hindrance, that is, the cost of the course. Some of our students can find that as a hindrance” (CCH#2, Personal Interview, April 9, 2018).

Furthermore, Philo explains:

“We ask them to come up with a kind of \$50 to show their commitment to the class and they have to get the forms sold out to show their commitments to the class. And so part of a hindrance for the class can be the cost to low-income students. We are primarily African-American in the school percentage wise. So, I want to say around seventy something percentage of African-American students. So it makes it difficult because of the money factor sometimes to get the students to be involved” (CCH#2, Personal Interview, April 9, 2018).

Philo tries to estimate the cost associated with dual enrollment programs in these words: “It depends on the amount of scholarship. I want to say the course cost around \$250 to \$270 or somewhere around that. I am not sure. They could get a scholarship like \$125 to \$200. I am not sure of the exact numbers. You have to check with them” (CCH#2, Personal Interview, April 9, 2018).

Philo stresses:

“Any kind of material that they need, the district provides. As far as a textbook or things like that, the students do not pay for any of that. Also, we pay for the cost of the class;

whatever that is not covered by the scholarship, the district has to take on those cost” (CCH#2, Personal Interview, April 9, 2018).

Students’ Perceptions on Support Systems

With regard to the support system Joseph says:

“Obviously, I received counseling for application to college while in College in High School 2 or 3 times per semester but as often as we wanted” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

Amanda says:

“I received tutoring from my high school though it was optional. Usually, I went 2 or 3 times a week for tutoring. The tutoring helped me in the program” (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Lucas received some financial Aid offered for the program through his high school. He was mentored by his teacher in the program and have relied on her even as a full-time college student doing Chemistry 2. While in College in High School, he received mentoring once in every 2 to 3 weeks. He believed that the majority of those who were in the class had more difficulty in the course than those who registered it for College in High School programs as well. This is because those in College in High School studied outside the class and got along better with each other.

Further, Regina states:

“I had the same adviser when I matriculated as a full-time college student as when I was in College Now. I had my adviser for a very long time. I definitely used my adviser every semester” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

She submitted that during their time in dual enrollment it was financed and paid for by both the high school and the college:

“Our dual enrollment was financed for. It was already paid for and we were given cards for food. If you go over the amount in the card you had to pay for it. I think it was financed by both college and high school. We were ready to go. The only thing was, you either get a good grade or you be kicked out” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

4.2.7 Theme Seven: Congenial Learning Environment

Seasoned administrators, good counselors, and effective instructors are pertinent in promoting dual enrollment programs for Black students and students from low-income families.

Staffing and other miscellaneous Issues in Dual Enrollment Programs.

College-Based Programs of Regent University

The instructors in College Now are the same for the rest of the full time matriculated students. Destiny describes the instructors in College Now thus:

“The people who teach the courses are the instructors and Professors in this university. There is nothing different, nothing special. They are students of this university” (ACB#1 Personal Interview, November 28, 2017).

At Regent University, the students are provided support not based on their color or socioeconomic status but simply because they are students in the program. She adds:

“The students are not readily identified as low-income or African American even though you can see some are African-Americans. All students are treated the same. The support services we provide to low-income students and African-American students are the same

with all the students because identification criteria are not as low-income students or African-American students” (ACB#1 Personal Interview, November 28, 2017).

The individualized attention and support that the students of College Now receive from the practitioners of the program make a big difference in their lives. At Alpha high school, Dynasty remarks:

“I definitely think that the interaction of the Staff at Regent University coming here is of a great benefit. The students have the Director’s number. I think they get that connection. They feel that somebody cares about them. Also the idea of them having a mentor, they try to hook them up with the students, so they have that connection. I think those are very helpful” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 15, 2018).

College in High School of Zenith University

At Zenith University, Jessy describes what it takes to be a dual enrollment instructor in College in High School programs thus:

“It is the high school teachers that teach the courses. And when the high school teachers apply, they apply through our online portal call the Inspire. And the liaison for the course will look at the application and decide for themselves whether the high school teacher is at the level needed to teach the college course. Each liaison will have different expectations and requirements from each high school teacher” (ACH#3, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

Zenith University expects high-quality teachers to be recruited in the high schools to teach the dual enrollment students because they are expected to provide students with additional support. Jane submits:

“Generally, they look at it in terms of does the teacher qualify to teach the course on campus” (ACH#2, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

Opportunities in College in High School: Extended Period of Studies

Joseph heard about dual enrollment in the junior and took the course in the senior year. He said:

“We took the course over a year instead of over a semester as in the University. I was very well prepared by Computer Science College in High School course” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

Amanda knew she will be taking Calculus in college. So she decided to participate in College in High School because its Calculus class is taken over an extended period of time from September to May instead of a semester. Amanda says:

“What people would learn from September to December, we learned from September to May” (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

She also felt it was easier to get help in high school than it is in college. She claims:

“College in High School definitely helped me to know the teacher and really helped prepare me about college at the Zenith University” (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

It gave her an idea of how a college test is, the level of difficulty and the number of materials one is expected to know for the exam. So when she arrived at Zenith University as full time matriculated student she was more prepared for it.

Meeting the Challenge of Course Contact Person

However, Joseph is of the view that having a point of contact with the university would have been very helpful. He had some more theoretical and practical questions

about how the course works and how it would fit into the major program that was answered by an adviser when he had enrolled in Zenith University. He made it clear that his teacher in College in High School knew the content but did not know how it would apply to his major-Computer Science. The question was answered in his freshman year in college but would have been absolutely much more helpful had it been answered while he was in College in High School. Joseph suggests:

“Just having a department or an adviser in Arts and Science in general from the University one can send an e-mail and get a reply in a week or two about the practicality of the university bureaucracies would have been helpful” (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018).

Curricular matters are mostly handled by the instructors in the various College in High School programs but technical and non-curricular matters are referred to the directorate office where the necessary solutions and support are provided. Tom puts it this way:

“The support is provided through the teachers. Sometimes we get questions from students that are outside of the specific curricular matters. So, we provide the parent or the student information about transferability of credit. We provide information on how to transfer their credit. We provide information on how a student might withdraw from the program, and how they should talk to the teachers about that and what the procedures are” (ACH#1, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

Challenges to College in High School: Connecting with the Events and Activities of the College.

Joseph says the College in High School did not offer him the opportunity to know the affiliate University activities at all (SCH#1, Personal Interview, April 3, 2018). In a similar manner, Amanda says:

“It did not help expose me to other programs and activities at Zenith University. It just focused on the course program” (SCH#2, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Lucas corroborates them thus:

“The program did not offer me any experience about the programs and activities of Zenith University except in its course area of Chemistry where we participated in Lab experiments.

On the other hand, Regina says:

“At Regent University, the College Now students are not treated differently from other regular college students. You just get involved by being around. When there are college program and activities, the teacher told everybody. At Regent University, we were real college students. You are not excluded from anything. You can do whatever you want to do” (SCB#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Meeting the Challenge of College Experience

Additionally, Zenith University tries to provide some campus experience opportunity to dual enrollment program students in the form of debate that sharpens their knowledge, skill, and competencies. Some courses Chemistry, for example, are provided with additional college campus laboratory participation. Jessy describes it thus:

“We do have some competition in Computer Science and debate competition. The students come down for the competition with their teachers. They do Lab here on

campus. Cybersecurity by Cyber department has competition in the summer” (ACH#3, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

College in High School students is invited from time to time to take part in an open house to experience campus life and some department to see whether that is the area they will like to major in. Again, Jessy puts in this way:

“We do have an open house in the campus where the students are invited to sit on a class to have a feeling of what the campus is all about and see whether school campus is what they will be interested in” (ACH#3, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

Further, Jessy articulates:

“Latin department do have an open house. They do invite the students to see what their department is all about and see if they may consider that as their major. It is a way to advertise their department” (ACH#3, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

Moreover, Cipher high school that partners with College Based programs take concrete and practical steps to foreshadow their students on what college life looks like by offering them the opportunity to experience life on a college campus. Desirae submits: “We also give our students the opportunity to have an overnight stay at certain colleges over the summer where they go for a week and experience it like a college student. They sit in classes. They eat lunch. They sleep in dorms. It is an amazing opportunity. So getting them as much exposure as possible is the key” (CCB#3 Personal Interview, February 27, 2018).

The challenges to College Based programs: Scheduling and Transportation

This is well articulated by Disney of Beta high school thus:

“It gives the high school students something to strive for and doing when they are in 11th and 12th grades. It is kind of difficult scheduling wise when the students have to leave their classes and to attend college courses. It can be tricky sometimes. They tend to miss some classes. It works to give them the opportunity and exposure. Sometimes, scheduling is the biggest hindrance that does not work. Maybe more support on the college level and family support will be quite helpful” (CCB#2, Personal Interview, February 6, 2018).

She reaffirms:

“Sometimes, transportation is an issue. We take to cover the cost but it is not always feasible. Some of the students are first-generation college students so the family does not know what to expect” (CCB#2, Personal Interview, February 6, 2018).

Challenge to College Now and College in High School: Credit Transferability and Catch Up.

One of the problems of dual enrollment that has persisted up to this moment is that not all the universities and colleges accept dual enrollment credits. Jessy observes: “One of the challenges will be credit transferability. It is not all the universities that accept credit transfer” (ACH#3, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

Tim alludes to this reality thus:

“We cannot guarantee that every college is going to accept this college credits from you. But if they do, it is a great benefit for you. So, I always lean toward if you can do it, pay for it and do it. And that might be less than you will pay back in student loan later or much less time you have to spend on a secondary level before you get your degree” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Regina presents her challenge in dual enrollment thus:

“My biggest difficulty while I was in College Now was that I still have to do my high school assignments. Because you are not in class every day you miss stuff. You always have to play catch up because you are only in school three days out of five” (SCB#1 Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

She claims that the high school teachers were sometimes not supportive because “they felt well you were not in class” (SCB#1 Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

But as she argues:

“I was not in class not because I went for a party or playing ping-pong but I went for a college class. So, teachers should support and help students to make up their notes” (SCB#1 Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

However, Lucas maintains that college pace was fast, so while he was in College in High School Chemistry he was also taking Physics in high school class as well which made the situation highly challenging to him. He claims:

“The program was more challenging at the beginning than I had previously thought. I thought it was like inside my high school. I did not think of the Lab experiment and studying outside my high school. It exceeded my expectation” (SCB#3, Personal Interview, April 17, 2018).

Meeting the Challenge of Catch up & Transportation

Alpha high school that partners with Regent University offer a quality opportunity to their students by providing them with transportation to and fro the University for their College Class. Dynasty describes their activities thus:

“Alpha high school puts at the disposal of dual enrollment students their library facility as well as built-in extra-time for the students to go into the library and do extra work. Dual

enrollment students attend college classes two times in a week and the rest of three days in the school week, they are given free schedule in their school during the same period to help them attend to their homework” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 17, 2018).

These are some of the strategies that Alpha high school use to assist the students who are participating in dual enrollment programs. She articulates the strategies thus:

“One will be through transportation. Two, they have extra-time in their day. So, we give them that facility, that extra-time in their schedule. So, we do not fill out that schedule for the extra-days when they are not in class at Regent University” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 17, 2018).

Academic Staffing and its Challenges

College in High School of Zenith University

At Delta high school, teaching in College in High School-Based programs is dependent on certification and the teaching schedule that works out for the teachers. No one is forced to teach in dual enrollment. It is by qualification and by choice. However, more often than not there is consistency as regards the teaching of the various courses. Tim explains it thus:

“So, we have the same person teaching sociology ever since. There was a guy that was there. When the person who was teaching it retired 10 years ago and the new person that replaced him did sociology, he will likely teach sociology class” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

He further explains:

“The guy that teaches Math class is the same that teaches AP calculus class, the same guy teaching the Math class and the same Guy teaching the web class. So, there is consistency

in that way. In the case of World Culture, because there are so many kids that take them, one person cannot teach them” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

The teachers would have to meet whatever qualification there are for that college to issue the credit. Tim clarifies the procedure in these words:

“Usually how that happens is that they submit the syllables. They submit the content and some examples for the work. And the college determines what the standard are. And if they are not, they make suggestions that here are some of the things we would like you to add to your class in order to bring it up to at par with what we will be teaching here at the college level. So, there have to be some negotiations back and forth between the colleges and the teachers who teach them” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Philo gives an insight on how a tutor was selected for College in High School American Politics at Gamma high school thus:

“The person that teaches American Politics is the most veteran teacher in the Social Studies department. And he has been teaching the AP course for several years. He was the best set and that is how we picked him. He was able to match up and got approved by Zenith University to become College in High School teacher. So, that was how he was picked” (CCH#2, Personal Interview, April 9, 2018).

4.2.8. Theme Eight Close Collaboration between Colleges and High Schools

The Universities have built a mutual, supportive, collaborative relationship that supports not only the partnering institutions but also the students. When the collaboration and communication between the universities and the partnering high schools are superb the underserved students thrive.

College-Based programs of Regent University

At the Regent University, the understanding between the College Based program and its partnering high schools are not only enshrined in the memorandum of understanding but also put in practice. Don sums it thus:

“Well, that is spelled out in the joint agreement. We have a joint agreement that both sides are signed. It has to do with recruiting student. It has to do with the process of getting them here, and it has to do with not being overwhelmed between their high school classes and college classes” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

He further explains:

“There are differences in the agreement between Beta high school and Alpha high school that has to do with payment, because of obvious differences between those two schools. We have a joint agreement that spelled out the duties and responsibilities of both sides. Either side can terminate the agreement if they feel that the terms are not being met or met as effectively as they want” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

He concludes thus:

“But in terms of these three high schools, we have had an outstanding relationship. We have not had any problem. We have good collaborative experience with our participating high schools” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

Dynasty chronicles what the close collaboration looks like in practice between Alpha high school and Regent University. She states:

“We work very closely with the Director and the coordinator. They will come to the school to meet with the students. They come to the school to do any testing that is

required. They will come and do scheduling with them. We e-mail back and forth often” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 17, 2018).

She adds:

“The school has started providing the transportation van because that was the biggest issue in the past. For the last two years, we have provided a van for the students to get to and fro. Any issue they are having there, the Director will e-mail or give us a call. There is a very close relationship with open communication” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 17, 2018).

At Cipher high school, Desirae gives a detailed account of how their high school and partnering University collaborate. Desirae describes how the partnership works in these words:

“Regent University and City College both come to our building and actually get our students registered. They have a chairman from Regent University that comes out to get our student registered, to get them familiar with the classes they can take, and the ones that they should be taking like General Education Classes for freshman year” (CCB#3 Personal Interview, February 27, 2018).

She adds:

“So they come out, we all work together, we all collaborate and get our students registered. And we stay in touch during the program as well. If one of my students start to slip, I immediately get an email with that student on it” (CCB#3 Personal Interview, February 27, 2018).

Collaboration between College in High School and High Schools

College in High School program has an excellent way of collaborating with its numerous partnering high schools. Jessy puts it beautifully thus:

“We collaborate through the yearly meetings with our teachers. And if it is the first time teachers they will have two meetings in the first year and after that, they have one meeting each year with the liaison where they go over the specifics. There is no cost to the high school or to the students” (ACH#3, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

The same sentiment was reechoed by Tom in these words:

“We are always in collaboration with our teachers and liaisons. The teachers in College in High School collaborate with our University professors in curricular matters if they have questions about grading, and if they have questions about a curricular issue” (ACH#3, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

Zenith University and City College have had a long history of collaboration with Delta high school. Tim explains:

“In fact ever since I have been working here. I started in April of 2000 we have had that relationship. I believe in teachers and universities because we have had that long-standing relationship. They have to reach out to each other. I am sure it is via e-mail each year” (CCH#1, Individual Interview, April 4, 2018).

4.2.9 Theme Nine: Familial and Community Engagement

The Universities and colleges have used dual enrollment program as an opportunity to engage with families and communities. Engagement with families and communities is a way to increase access and success of Black students and low-income students in dual enrollment programs.

College-Based program of Regent University

At College Based programs, Don reflects on the place the Regent University has for College Based programs in these words:

“The University is enriched by the presence of the students. Our president has this program as part of our community engagement. Sometimes, the University tolerate the existence of outside and special programs but they aren’t really engaged with these programs. That is not the case here. There is nothing to suggest that it is the same with our program” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

He affirms:

“The faculty love the students, they are generally well-prepared and highly motivated. Even in a time of declining financial resources we have maintained the program because it works for us” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

He assures that the College Based program has a beneficial effect on the communities thus: “Definitively, it is positive. It has a positive community effect that we are doing outreach to Pittsburgh area high schools to bring students here at the university. I think it is a community enhancement outreach. It helps students that want to attend college to attend” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

Dynasty corroborates:

“Another thing is every year, the College Based program has facilitated a lunch day when students come down. They provide dinner for the family and meet with the parents. I feel that has been very helpful in answering questions and making them more comfortable. We go to the Regent University one evening of summer and the students get their ID that

has been helpful in getting the family involved and answering all their questions” (CCB#1 Personal Interview, January 17, 2018).

For Alpha high school that partners with Regent University, it is a great opportunity for family and community involvement. Dynasty explains:

“At the end of February every year, we have a community night. And we have invited Regent University to be a part of that. Where they have a table set up at the community night where they can answer questions of parents and students. And as a school, we are providing those to anyone who wants to take advantage of it” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 17, 2018).

College in High School Based Programs of Zenith University

More so, Zenith University College in High School program has a goal of community service. Tom says:

“Dual enrollment program is an excellent way we are fulfilling that service in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania” (ACH#1, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018). It does this through participation at parents’ night meeting as well as College in High programs at its numerous participating high schools.

4.3.0 Theme Ten: Efficacy: Programs’ Observed Outcomes

College-Based programs of Regent University and College in High School-Based programs of Zenith University in South-Western Pennsylvania go their discrete ways with regard to the site location of their programs, tutors, period duration, and their attendant methodical approaches. However, they are united in their aims, goals, and ambitions to produce mature high school students who are steep in their college and

career readiness. “College Based” and “College in High School Based” programs are remarkable with regard to the students’ outcomes in their programs.

The qualitative measures that support the benefits of dual enrollment are overwhelming from the interviewees. Most of the respondents see it as a great opportunity for high school students to get prepared for college, get college credit, and get exposure to what it means to be in College. It is a great learning experience as high school students have an opportunity to accumulate credits which are transferable toward their degree attainment while enjoying the comfort of home and community environment. Destiny puts it this way:

“It is a good opportunity for the students to get college credits which they can transfer over to the college they decide to go full time. It is a great learning experience” (ACB#1 Personal Interview, November 28, 2017).

Disney agrees that:

“It is a great opportunity for students to have access to earning college credit while in high school. Not only is that I think it is nice for high school students to get a feel of what college life looks like. When they are in high school they still get the support of their high school teachers so they are not completely on their own as if to say they are full college students, so it is a great opportunity for them” (CCB#2, Personal Interview February 6, 2018).

Dual enrollment program is adjudged to be the most successful way of preparing students for college and career readiness. It helps them to understand exactly what it means to be in college by being exactly a college student. Don submits:

“I think dual enrollment is an excellent way of preparing high school students for college...And, it is the most successful approach that I know for enhancing college readiness” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

Dual enrollment presents a wonderful opportunity for equity in school systems and tries to present a level playing ground for every student irrespective of color, race and socio-economic status. Jane puts it thus:

“I think it is an excellent one way to address equity and access. It gives students access to college, gain college credits, and while in the program build confidence to go to college at a very low cost to them while still enjoying the convenience of their high school environment during the day” (ACH#2, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

The beauty of dual enrollment is that every category of students has the opportunity to experience rigorous coursework that builds strong knowledge, skills, competencies, and confidence needed to succeed in collegiate settings. Jessy observes:

“The students have the chance to have the same quality material that they would have had at the college level except that it is spread out over the 9 months” (ACH#3, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

Dual enrollment programs are a foretaste of the real college experience that offers students an opportunity to make informed decisions about going to college. She goes further to add:

“It gives the student the opportunity to try college rigor courses and for them to decide for themselves if they are ready for the next step in their education” (ACH#3, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

College-Based Programs of Regent University

The programs have set goals which they strive to achieve. Don reiterates:

“And so as I stated at the very beginning, this is a college preparation program. Our goal is to make young men and young women to be better prepared (a) to enter college and (b) be successful when they are in college. And so the bulk of the preparation is at the courses they take” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

The dual enrollment programs of Regent University make students better prepared for college, go to college at a higher rate than non-dual enrollment students, and in college, they persist better. He points out:

“I hear from a lot of our students on that because (1) they are better prepared (2) they engage in academic and social life on campus. They make use of college facilities and interact with professors. They are a college student while they are here and they perceive themselves as a college student” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

Don comments on the outcome of College-Based programs in terms of percentage that goes to college, persist and graduate on time in these words:

“I do not have hard data to support this assertion but I have soft data based on what the students are telling me, that the retention rate is higher than other first-year freshmen.

One, they go to college at the rate of about 85% higher than any other category of students at the high school. Two, once they are there, they are retained at a higher level than other non-dual enrollment students. They tend to graduate on time or ahead of semesters” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

He articulates the strength of the College Based programs thus:

“Part of the strength of the College Based program is our 10 years of existence, more young people go to college, and it serves as a bridge between school/school district, community and the university” (ACB#2, Personal Interview, January 18, 2018).

The benefits that accrue from the programs depend on each student and the number of courses, a student succeeds in completing while in the program. Destiny responds: “It depends on how long they have been taking courses. It depends on how many credits different students need to place students as freshmen or sophomores at a university. If a student takes 2 courses per semester starting in 11th grade. If they have 8 classes with three credits each that will give them 24 credits. That is not bad. If they follow that tract that is an advanced track” (ACB#1 Personal Interview, November 17, 2017).

The benefits of the program cannot be over-emphasized as it provides the student with a solid basis to build their career and academic programs. She emphasizes: “I think they are very helpful. They provide the students with a solid foundation on the expectation and rigor of college course. I think it is beneficial that students will take enough classes to mitigate their first semester in college as a freshman, to begin with, the second semester that saves them a lot of money. I know they do get reduced tuition and that is a huge benefit financially. I think it will have a significant impact in their lives that they have a jump on their peers” (ACB#1 Personal Interview, November 17, 2017).

In addition, the program does promote students’ self-efficacy. Dynasty articulates it thus:

“I think it definitely lets them see what the expectations are. It gives them a lot of confidence to know. Hey, I can do this. I do have the ability to complete this. They see

the changes and differences between college and the high school” (ACB#1 Personal Interview, November 17, 2017).

Dual enrollment has the capacity to increase the participants’ maturity level, time management and the ability to balance their personal, social, and academic life. Dynasty states:

“I definitively notice an increase in their maturity level when they take a class at College Based programs or any other dual enrollment. As for the specific content, their classroom teachers may notice that but I personally do not have access to that record. I do see that they are successful in their high school classes here as well” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 15, 2018).

At Alpha high school, the impact of dual enrollment programs is well pronounced. Dynasty observes:

“The way we know if our programs are meeting their stated objectives are (a) If the students are persisting and making C and above (b) the percentage that goes to college (c) If they are persisting and graduating... You recognize the programs are meeting their objectives if the students are successful there at the university” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 15, 2018).

She acknowledges:

“Definitely, it is positive. It gives us a great opportunity. I have several students but one comes to mind, he did dual enrollment in 11th and 12th grades, and he went to American University in DC with 20 credits under his belt including three levels of Arabic. So, definitely, it gives students great benefits” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 15, 2018). She affirms:

“If the students are earning good credits it means we are meeting the objectives. I wish I have more students who are going. But I don’t want to kind force students to go and not be successful. Even if we have 5 to 10 students going each year, I believe those students are making gains. It is not for everyone but it is there for everyone who wants to take advantage of it. If they have to have that initiative to do that” (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 15, 2018).

She insists:

“They have more maturity, they have more freedom and they have a better understanding of what life after high school entails for them (CCB#1, Personal Interview, January 15, 2018).

Dual enrollment programs impact the lives of students in profound ways. Disney of Beta high school confirms that dual enrollment improves students’ maturity, motivation and time management. She states:

“I think it has a huge impact on students. The students that we have given the opportunity to take dual enrollment class, they often want to continue in college, to pursue a college career, going to college. We give them an opportunity to see what college life is like, and what college course is like and how different it is from high school. It kind of give them the motivation to want to finish high school and go into college to further their education” (CCB#2, Personal Interview, February 6, 2018).

Desirae reechoed a similar sentiment thus: “For me, I wish it is something that every high school students can experience because it is teaching you how to have balance in your life, and you have to be able to manage your time” (CCB#3, Personal Interview, February 21, 2018).

College in High School Based Programs of Zenith University

At Zenith University, dual enrollment program is making remarkable success and impacting the lives of the participating students and community as well. Tom states it thus: “About 13% of our college in high school students do choose our University as their preferred college to continue their college education” (ACH#1, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

Students who participate in College in High School has a better opportunity of graduating ahead of other students who did not take part in the program. Jane states: “They have the opportunity of beginning college as a 2nd-semester freshman. They have a better understanding of rigor and exposure to the rigorous program, have an opportunity for a field trip and sit in a real college class at the University” (ACH#2, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

Dual enrollment students enjoy the support of their teachers, save a lot of money in college and start a conversation about college and career life. Jessy points out: “So many of them begin to make their dream real as well as save money. Starting the college earlier, the teacher in College in High School can get the conversation earlier and it becomes a reality earlier” (ACH#3, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

The students who participate in College in High School-Based programs tend to have a high GPA than those who do not participate. Tom observes: “At the end of every year, the record the teachers turn in indicate 85% get C or better grades. There is statistical evidence that those who participate in dual enrollment have a higher GPA in college and do better in college” (ACH#1, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

Jessy reports that at the end of their annual meeting, teachers do fill in evaluation surveys to let them know if they are satisfying the needs of the professors and students (ACH#3, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018). According to Tom, the evaluation result indicates that:

“99% of the teachers agree with the services we provide to the professors and students, and it is an opportunity to let us know more we can do. (ACH#1, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

Jessy articulates:

“The strength of our program is the relationship of the teachers with our professors to grow in their subject areas” (ACH#3, Focus group Interview, February 7, 2018).

Tim concurs thus:

“Obviously if they can handle what is considered a college level work here at 15, 16, 17, or 18 years old, it can be nothing but beneficial to them as they transition to college. The same thing with some of our AP classes and honor classes that they take” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Tim went further to say:

“Often times they come back to us, and to their teachers and tell them that their freshman year in college was such a breeze because they were well-prepared. Because of what they were taught here at the high school and the regular program that made their transition to college much easier and successful for them” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Generally, it is not only that dual enrollment has a positive impact on the students and high schools but it has a less negative impact as well. This was pointed out by Tim when he says:

“Other than the kids that are taking the advantage of the classes over at City College, it does not negatively impact in any way. The kids that take classes at City College, great for them they are getting the college credits but that is less time here in the building. But for all the classes that are taught here by our teachers, I think it is wonderful” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

He goes on to say:

“It has no negative impact on us. It actually sustains our staff. If a school for that reason decides to downsize or not replace a teacher that is retired. That is the talk all the time now. How can we spend less money on staff and give kids more opportunity?” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

He continues in these words:

“It could boost staffing but I don’t know whether we are going to get any more teachers or hiring. I know that our current school board is all about this College in High School opportunities. They are encouraging more and more participation with the universities. I cannot imagine them say we are going to add more teachers. It may sustain our current staff level” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Tim stresses:

“The current trend is that the school board is looking more and more toward online learning as opposed to the standard classroom instruction. With me as an educator here, I will hate to see it taking all my classes as opposed to teachers teaching them. It is a trend

that is becoming more popular. Not that I am against online learning or something like that. Everybody has one's own situation and its own learning style. What works best for you works best for you. I will hate to see it eliminate standard brick and mortar situation" (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Tim describes his perspective on knowing whether dual enrollment is achieving its desired impact thus:

"I don't know for sure but because we have standard relationships with so many schools for such a long time. And the trend is that they are adding more opportunities for the kids. I am assuming that teachers are teaching what they are supposed to be teaching and the universities are satisfied with the content of what they are teaching. But again not being in the classroom and not knowing directly, not having direct communication with post-secondary institutions I don't know that for sure. The trend is that they are adding more jobs as opposed to taking them away and meeting standards" (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

He observes:

"Obviously, the positive is that if a student can come out of the high school with college credit already in hand it will benefit them... If we can get them the cost saving and an accelerated degree, then I am all for it (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

On the other hand, he points out:

"I cannot see any negative of it other than if you run into college that says that they are not accepting any of these credits, any of these College in High School opportunities. Again, that is when you bought the insurance and you didn't have an accident and you

are still complaining about the cost of the insurance” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

He adds:

“The same thing with cost in high school credit and they did not accept it. If anything you just lost a couple of hundreds of dollars for these opportunities, you still learned a college level work and should be able to handle what is at the next level” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

He goes on to say:

“I don’t have data per se but anecdotally I will say they kind of get the students into the mindset of college. It is having that connection and just knowing that they are getting a kind of jump start. And some of their college credit, I think that they are huge benefits. A lot of our students are not finishing their college degree in 4 years and so I think this is a kind of way to help with that to get a little bit of jump start (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Tim goes on to state some of the benefits that are derived from dual enrollment thus:

“And also when possible, a student getting a scholarship, it will help them financially. It is a way of getting some college credit out of the way without having to take financial AID, loan or anything like that. So, that can help the financial burden of college if scholarships are an option for low-income students. It can help them financially because that is one of the reasons why kids drop out of college because they cannot financially afford to continue. So, getting some of those college credits out of the way” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

He concludes:

“The other thing is that there is a growing number of students who need remediation courses. And I see a lot of that. I see a lot going into remediation courses before they can get into some of their major courses. So, having some College in High School credits can help them combat having to take some of these remediation courses as well” (CCH#1, Personal Interview, April 4, 2018).

Philo expresses her perspective on the goals of dual enrollment in these words:

“I think it keeps us competitive with other schools. A lot of times people feel like being a small school in impoverished areas, the kids do not have the same opportunity. A lot of times, they don’t have as many opportunities. So, it is very nice to say we have some opportunities that some bigger schools that might have more money have for their students. So, that our students can compete with those other students when they go to college. I think that it is a great thing, it is a nice thing to highlight some of the positive opportunities for our students” (CCH#2, Personal Interview, April 9, 2018).

She goes on to add:

“Overall, it has been a positive experience, I like the flexibility that the Zenith University has with the faculty. What has worked is that they are open to improving opportunities.” (CCH#2, Personal Interview, April 9, 2018).

On the other hand, she observes:

“What has not worked as far as our school is concerned is not having as many opportunities, not having as many courses offered in general. And again, the financial burden on the school, and on the students does not work out as well” (CCH#2, Personal Interview, April 9, 2018).

She reasons:

“I think that is where the divide is, you see the wealthier district where it is not a big financial burden for parents to go ahead pay for these classes and give the students the benefit. Our students have limited financial means. They are not as able to pay for these courses like some of the wealthier district. I think these are some of the areas of improvements but overall it has been a positive experience” (CCH#2, Personal Interview, April 9, 2018).

4.4.0 Discussion: Data Analysis, Interpretation and Synthesis

At both Alpha high school that partners with “College Based” program as well as Delta high school that partners with “College in High School Based” program, while White students are overrepresented, Black students remain underrepresented in dual enrollment programs in the sampled two high schools. This is consistent with the finding of Museus, Lutovsky, and Colbert (2007) that White and Asian students participate at a proportionately high level, while Black and Latino's students are disproportionately underrepresented in dual enrollment programs in Pennsylvania State. Further, the finding of Museus, Lutovsky and Colbert (2007) that the higher the poverty, the less likely the students will participate and the lesser the poverty the more the students will participate was valid for Delta high school but not validated for Alpha high school. For example, at Alpha high school, while 56% of the participating students in dual enrollment are high-poverty level students, only 44% of lower-poverty level students are participating in dual enrollment programs of the school. On the other hand, the proposition applies aptly to Delta high school where 84% of the participants are of lower poverty level students, while only 16% of the participants are high-poverty level students. Hence, the inverse proportionality between poverty and participation was not consistent with regard to

Alpha high school but was confirmed with Delta high school. Hence, though poverty and underrepresentation are correlated, there is no causation.

There are differences regarding when students should hear about dual enrollment programs by different high schools. Practitioners' views on when a student is informed of the dual enrollment programs range from 8th grade to 10th grade. "Many honors students believed that students need to start preparing, academically, for college in 9th grade or later, but stated that they had started much earlier, often in elementary school" (Venezia, Kirst & Antonio, 2003, p.40). Adequate and critical dissemination of information about dual enrollment to students is very crucial. However, initiating information about dual enrollment in elementary school may be too early to make much sense to young school pupils. Initiating crucial information about dual enrollment at the high school could have been late. This is because at that stage most of the high schoolers may have made up their mind on what to do with their lives after high school. The middle school, especially grades 7th and 8th seem to be the most appropriate time to start talking to school age children about the importance of dual enrollment programs and the need for them to participate in it. This will be as from about the age of 11, which corresponds with the window of opportunities. Though learning is a lifelong process, ages 2 to 11, so-called "window of opportunity" provides critical period when a child creates a strong pathway to growth cognitively, socially, and emotionally (David, 1998, p.52).

Though the various modes of disseminating dual enrollment information to reach students are necessary, they are not sufficient. The most vital ones that make a difference in students' lives are validating human agents of teachers, counselors, administrators, family members, and peers. These validating agents are ultimately those who make

students to develop interest and flair for dual enrollment programs. So, in order for practitioners to create a diverse program where Black students and low-income students are equitably represented validating human influence are essential. It is validating human agents from a multiplicity of sources both familial, non-familial members, and institutional agents who need to approach Black students and low-income students to encourage them to take up dual enrollment programs. This validation as it were should be personal, social and academic. Indeed, targeted recruitment of Black students and students from low-income families is pertinent for equity and social justice to be achieved in dual enrollment programs.

Most high schools disseminate information to all the students as part of their scheduling process and make the opportunity available to all the students. Shifting from inaccessibility to equal access rules that insist on treating equally, Black and White students can only remedy outrageous forms of injustice, but leaves untouched the underlying ones that Black students have to grapple with every day that accounts for most of their alienation, pain, grief, and despair (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). All things being equal, the White students and high-income students have more opportunity of receiving information about dual enrollment programs when compared to their counterparts since the latter are mostly tracked out of gifted programs (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Gifted programs provide more ample opportunity for students to receive information about dual enrollment programs (Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003).

One who professes color blindness as an approach to social issues can hardly see segregation because racism requires us to think in terms of groupings and racial power (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). Antiracist literacy, unlike multiculturalism, goes beyond

the celebration of diversity programs to expose the social, political, cultural and ideological substructure that precipitate racial disparity and hierarchy (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). Anti-racism is not passive but action-oriented (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). “That is, doing nothing affirmative against racism is a default action contributing to its survival, just as a moving object in space moves in the same direction without a deliberate force to counter it” (Leonardo, 2013, p.17).

A brief reflection of the historical, political and socio-economic context of the Black people in the U.S will help to shed light on the remote reasons for the achievement gaps between high-income and low-income students in general and the underrepresentation of Black students in dual enrollment in particular (Ladson-Billings, 2006). On the one hand, White students enjoy decades of privileges that have an intergenerational accumulation of power, wealth and privileges (Feagin, 2006). On the other hand, Black students have undergone decades of deprivation, segregation, and alienation arising from past slavery, segregation and contemporary racism (Feagin, 2006). These historical matrixes reflect for better or worse in the economic fortune of both the White and Black families (Feagin, 2006). These macro-factors still find expression in schools and institutions as meso-factors in tracking, stereotypes, deficit view and low expectations; which trickle down to micro-factors, such as educators’ implicit bias and micro-aggression against Black students that are manifested in their beliefs, attitudes, and behavior in classrooms (Thompson, 2004). All these and more have given vent to the achievement gap between White and high-income students on the one hand, and Black students and low-income students on the other.

In addition, there are stereotypes, bias, and alienation that continue to fuel the under-preparation of Black students and students from low-income families through K-12. Critical Race Theorists (CRT) do not see race and racism as marginal to education but central as they permeate every aspect of schooling (Leonardo, 2013). “CRT in education is precisely the intervention that aims to halt racism by high-lightening its pedagogical dimensions and affirming an equal pedagogical solution rooted in anti-racism” (Leonardo, 2013, p.12). Whites have not only benefited from intergenerational advantages of good schools, government job programs, and other assistance programs but also the substantial exclusion of Black communities from these resources and services for centuries (Feagin, 2006). More often than not while the White students are succeeding, the Black and low-income students are failing (Rooda and Lomax, 2015). In education, Black students and students of low-income are failing due to structural injustice in the social set up. Every system is perfectly designed to yield the result it delivers (Langley, Moen, Nolan, Nolan, Norman, & Provost, 2009, p.79). The U.S. educational system as currently construed is designed to deliver unacceptable results for Black and low-income students.

However, underrepresentation of Black students and low-income students in dual enrollment programs occasioned by inadequate preparation and poor funding contributes to their lack of college and career readiness and success. It is also due to low expectations of high school teachers on Black students and students from low-income backgrounds that they are exposed to lower order skills (Au, 2011), thereby bringing forth self-fulfilling prophecy. Black and low-income students need to be exposed to higher-order critical thinking (Au, 2011). The interests and needs of students from an ethnic minority

are not properly met in school content curriculum due to the hidden curriculum (Au, 2011). There is a cultural disconnect between the home culture of the ethnic minorities and the Anglo-European culture which is practiced in schools (Au, 2011). The dissonance between the school culture and home/community culture of ethnic minorities and low-income students contributes to the achievement gap between them and mainstream students (Au, 2011). Hence, incorporating the home and community culture of Black and low-income students into school culture will go a long way in closing the opportunity gap between mainstream students and underserved student populations (Au, 2011).

Dual enrollment program still operates as an elitist institution meant only for the exceptionally talented few privileged ones (Hoffman, 2005). In principle every high school student with an interest in dual enrollment programs irrespective of color, tongue, or race who maintains a grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 and above and is recommended by a teacher together with a parent/ guardian consent can participate in dual enrollment programs (Allen, 2010; Hoffman, 2005; McCarthy, 1999). In practice, there are variances from state to state with regard to criteria of qualification to be eligible for enrollment in the program (Hoffman, 2005; McCarthy, 1999). Some states set a very high bar while others consider average students (Hoffman, 2005), and low achieving students (Brewerr, Stern & Ahn, 2007; Jobs for the Future, 2008).

It has been argued that dual enrollment programs are college-level coursework and therefore should admit only high achieving students. The findings indicate that even students who were admitted based on their high academic achievement found it still hard and when they were supported they became successful. Initially, some of the students were not focused in their first semester thinking they were still taking high school

subjects. They faltered and were supported. They recovered and became more focused. College-Based programs and College in High School-Based programs have the culture of providing supports to students which have made them successful. The importance of personal, psycho-social, financial, and academic support for the success of high school students cannot be over-emphasized. It is even more so for Black students and students from low-income families.

The advocacy for equitable participation of Black students and students from a low-income background in dual enrollment is not a call to lower standards. It is rather a call for equity, social justice, flexibility, and academic support in the recruitment and practice of dual enrollment programs (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Roach, Gamez, Vargas, & David, 2015; Venezia & Jaeger, 2013). There is a need for more support strategies for Black students and low-income students prior, and during the period of their dual enrollment programs. In and around the Pittsburgh region, discrepancies abound with regard to minimum GPA requirements for admission. Even among high schools in the same area, there are obvious differences regarding the GPA requirements ranging from 2.0 to 3.0 and above. The admission criteria for the following colleges stand as follows:

“Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) 2.0, Robert Morris University (RMU) 2.5, Penn State University (PSU) 3.0...” (Milburn, 2015, n.p). It is always good to maintain a high standard. It is not uncommon to admit students to take a course in dual enrollment in the courses of their strength. There is nothing unusual to admit students who get “As” in Mathematics to do dual enrollment programs in Mathematics or any other course of their strength.

Should a college finds it necessary to settle for 3.0 GPA and above, it may be appropriate to find a way to be involved in the preparation of high school students from their freshman year to help them qualify for dual enrollment programs. One goal of Pre K-16 is to provide better support and scaffolding for low-income students, and students of color who find it hard to navigate from one segment of the school system to another (Hoffman, 2005). This will require an agenda that will warrant cooperation, collaboration, and integration across high school and postsecondary school that will transform both institutions for better (Hoffman, 2005). Broward Community College's dual enrollment program of Florida has aligned high school learning with college faculty expectations and has been helping students to transit securely into postsecondary institutions-especially students who would not have been able to do so (Hoffman, 2005, p.19). More so, City University of New York (CUNY) has a clearly articulated mission to serve a wide range of students and do help underprepared students meet CUNY admission standard without remediation (Hoffman, 2005). This is the path to equity and justice in the face of socio-political circumstances of Black students and students from low-income families.

Again, dual enrollment programs do not have a unified means of funding across all the states in the U.S. In some states, the decision is locally made while in others the state takes the decision. In some state, the students take dual enrollment courses free of charge (Hoffman, 2005) while in others they are required to pay (McCarthy, 1999). In some states such as Arizona, Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, and North Dakota students pay the tuition (McCarthy, 1999). While well to do families can seek out post-secondary educational opportunities for their children and pay for it, and build a record of credits for

their children, many low-income students who may benefit from the program cannot do so (Hoffman, 2005; McCarthy, 1999). The high school districts that take care of students in dual enrollment are on the right track. The tuition reduction and sometimes outright scholarship that both Regent University and Zenith University provide are laudable.

However, the best way remains a situation in which the burden is neither borne by the high school students nor the participating institutions but by a public agency. This view is in line with Hoffman (2005) proposal that “funding mechanism be based on the principle of no cost to students and no harm to partnering institutions (p.2).” Though dual enrollment students are college students in the “*ordo cognoscendi*” (order of knowledge), they remain high school students in the “*ordo essendi*” (order of existence). So, the policy that requires that high school students’ fees and tuition be taken care of by taxpayers’ public fund should equally apply to dual enrollment students. School-age children should not be denied this great opportunity for dual enrollment programs due to economic constraints.

Moreover, high school students require supports in order to persist and succeed in dual enrollment programs. This is even more so for Black students and students from low-income families. It is appropriate that students in dual enrollment programs are given tutorial support, guidance-counseling, and mentorship. Guidance-counselors need to transcend traditional advising to appreciative advising. Mentoring students is a very laudable program since some of these students come from a single parent home. Hence, positive role models are important. However, student mentors, unlike guidance-counselors, may not have undergone through any formal training. Hence, there is a need to first mentor the mentors. Put differently, the mentors need orientation programs to

understand how best to handle dual enrollment students. Unlike a situation where full-time matriculated students approach the staff for their needs, in the case of dual enrollment students, the onus is on the mentors to approach students and decipher their needs. This is because even though they are formally college students, they remain basically high school students. Mentors should initiate and ask the right questions rather than expect dual enrollment students to take the initiative.

Dual enrollment programs present a veritable opportunity for institutions to break the cycle of inadequate preparation of Black students and students from low-income families. The fact that fast-growing subgroups are those who are lagging behind in dual enrollment participation, developing strategies that encourage their greater participation is very much desirable (Museus, Lutovsky, & Colbeck, 2007; Pretlow, & Wathington, 2014). Howley et al. (2003) submit: “Most fundamentally, the involvement of what participating programs call “underprepared” students presents a substantial challenge because the early college or dual enrollment arrangement must somehow cultivate preparedness for college-level work while requiring “underprepared” students to perform such work adequately” (p.83).

There is neither category of students who are *tabula rasa* nor guru. All students are learners. And all students are educable when they are presented with an equitable opportunity and congenial environment. The reality is that most Black students and students from low-income families need even more personal, academic, psycho-sociological and financial support in order to access, persist and succeed in dual enrollment programs. Differentiated strategies are used to ensure that the educational needs of each student are met and each student is given the opportunity to move from

where the person is to where one should be. It is used as a strategy to meet up with the educational needs of Black students and low-income students. Differentiation modifies instruction to suit each student's ability, interest, readiness, and profile without modifying the student (Gregory & Chapman, 2007). This resonates with Latin adage which states: *Quidquid recipitur ad modum recipientis recipitur* (Whatever that is received is received according to the mode of the recipient).

The role of an educator is not limited to analyzing the broad segments of the students but also "... refers to someone who is capable of articulating emancipatory possibilities and working towards their realization" (McLaren, 2007, p.253). McLaren (2007) view on education is not just a formalized standard practice which is designed to suit and maintain the status quo but serves as a liberating tool for human, socio-political, and economic emancipation. This is a form of education that challenges the status quo ante with a bias in favor of the proletariat, the underserved and ethnic minorities (McLaren, 2007). The underserved students need to be emancipated through critical pedagogy, social consciousness, moral overtone and political action (McLaren, 2007). He argues that "By politicizing the notion of schooling, we also illuminate the role that educators may play as transformative intellectuals performing a particular and political function" (McLaren, 2007, p.252). He redefines the primary role of a teacher as that of a social and moral agent (McLaren, 2007). An authentic educator believes and works for the success of all students especially at-risk-ones. Hence, elucidating the students, irrespective of race, ethnicity, gender, age, color, religion, and social status, emancipating their spirits, empowering them to champion the cause of change, freedom, hope, and brighter future for all remain the hallmark of an authentic educator (McLaren, 2007).

Targeted recruitment and equitable participation of Black students and students from low-income families in dual enrollment programs is the best way to ensure equity and justice in the dual enrollment programs. Dual enrollment programs have become an effective way to accomplish students' educational goals (Barnett & Stamm, 2010). The programs have been found to be increasingly efficacious for students. It prepares students for, gives them easy access and success in college (Foster, 2010; Hugo, 2001). It benefits a broad spectrum of students (An, 2013b; Karp, Calcagno, Hughes, Jeong & Bailey, 2007). Rodriguez, Hughes, and Belfield (2012) find that dual enrollment programs have a great impact on low-income, academically struggling and traditionally underrepresented youth in higher education. Their findings indicate that in comparison to their district peers in California, dual enrollment participants had greater high school graduation rates, were less likely to take basic skills courses upon entry into college, and more likely to attend college (Rodriguez, Hughes, and Belfield, 2012). And in college, they are more likely to persist and earn more credits in their first two years when compared to their non-dual enrollment counterparts (Rodriguez, Hughes, and Belfield, 2012). Moreover, dual enrollment programs provide students with an enhanced and enriched curriculum (Foster, 2010; Hugo, 2001). Dual enrollment saves money for families and taxpayers and shortens time to degree (Hoffman, 2005). It is a cost-effective way to obtain a college degree (Barnett & Stamm, 2010; Hoffman, 2005; McCarthy, 1999), as well as offers many opportunities for social and psychological maturity (Johnson & Brophy, 2006).

The underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment makes them drop out of school, unprepared for college and career, and unable to transit to post-secondary education (Purnell, 2014). Dropping out of schools exposes them to

unemployment. When they are employed, they are either under-employed or engage in low paying jobs because of the lack of college credentials (Hoffman, 2005). It is estimated that “1.2 million students drop out of high school every year, many falling into a cycle of poverty, unemployment, and violence” (The dropout crisis and poverty, 2016, p.1).

CHAPTER 5: Generative Impact

5.1.0 Measurable / Observable changes and would be change

My intuitive theory of action is based on the following assumptions:

- (a) A significant gap exists between high school preparation and the admission requirements of college institutions that so many Black students and students from low-income families are not able to overcome (Venezia & Jaeger, 2013). Dual enrollment can fill this gap as it promises a smooth and natural transition from high school to college (Hugo, 2001; McCarthy, 1999). However, for the Black students to enjoy the benefits of dual enrollment they need equitable access and quality opportunity.
- (b) The assumption is currently that dual enrollment is an avenue of escape from high school experiences rather than an enhancement of high school experience (Hoffman, 2005). The proposition is for dual enrollment to be redefined beginning with the view that “Dual enrollment is a mechanism for aligning high school and post-secondary education, not just a way to move bored or advanced students out of high school” (Hoffman, 2005, p.11).

Other assumptions are as follows: (c). Information dissemination about dual enrollment is still scanty and not timely as dual enrollment requires academic planning (McCarthy, 1999; Pretlow & Wathington, 2013). Some states now require that schools give written information about dual enrollment, though timely and adequate dissemination of information still rests with each school district (McCarthy, 1999).

(d) Social issues are not given adequate attention and pride of place they deserve in public schools with adequate intercultural sensitivity (Anderson, 1988). Educators should

be social and moral reformers and students should be trained to be critical thinkers and social reformers who are able to transform society for better (McLaren, 2007).

As an educational leader with an interest in design development practice, one has come to understand the fiscal policies and practices that are in place in Florida, New York and Pittsburgh that can create a level playing ground for all students irrespective of their race or socioeconomic status. If Black students receive good preparation together with comprehensive system support, they will experience equitable participation and success in dual enrollment programs. This is all about making intuitive theories of action explicit in the light of design, development, logic, and analysis (Mintrop, 2016). This will result in equitable participation and success of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. The advocacy for equitable participation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs requires advocacy that challenges the mental dissonance of educators who see business as usual. “Ultimately, it is teachers-not programs –that make the difference by changing the nature of teaching and learning interactions in classrooms” (Au, 2011, p.3).

5.2.0. Core Improvement Principles

Making my research project problem-specific and user-centered

In sum, the focal points of my strategic problem of practice are the underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs occasioned by inadequate preparation of the students by educators, and lack of adequate funding of the programs. Inadequate funding and poor preparation of Black and low-income students are not only urgent problems but also ones for which something can be done. Each core challenge requires the corresponding dynamic of organizational change

(Mintrop, 2016). “Improvements in organizational effectiveness often revolve around coordination, coherence, and follow-through. Improvements in learning complexity often hone in on capacity building, commitment, and autonomy” (Mintrop, 2016, p.2) Cultural mutation for equity needs to address the issues of value discordance, courageous collegial conversations, and ethical leadership (Mintrop, 2016). The challenges of poor funding and inadequate preparation of Black and low-income students for and in dual enrollment programs cut across these dynamics of change.

Focus on variation in performance as core problem

Dual enrollment programs provide many opportunities toward meeting the challenges of college and career readiness of high schoolers. Dual enrollment as presently constituted is not a fair share of burden and benefits. The variation is that White students have considerable participation in the programs (Zinth, 2014) and enjoy the benefits of easy access to and success in college (Foster, 2010; Hugo, 2001). Meanwhile, the Black students are grossly underrepresented and denied the benefits (Carter, 2006; Zinth, 2014; Pretlow & Wathington, 2013). In other words, justice as equity and fairness was not served in the programs and “the tenor of the discourse shifted from academic excellence to academic equity” (Howley, et.al, 2013, p.80). Unfortunately, many people still perceive dual enrollment programs as elitist institutions meant to serve the interest of advanced students and not all students. Hence, in many states, locality, and institutions people of color remain at the margin when it comes to dual enrollment programs. More often than not Black and low-income students remain underrepresented in dual enrollment programs due to lack of adequate preparation and funding. Even where and

when they have comparative participation, they remain underserved due to a lack of a comprehensive support system that makes for success.

Seeing the system that produces unacceptable outcomes

Many policymakers, educators and industrialists now agree that to earn a decent middle-class wage in our time post-secondary education is important for all students (Hoffman, 2005). The aspiration of many students for college and career readiness remains unfulfilled (Venezia, Kirst & Antonio, 2003). It is even more so for Black and low-income students due to a lack of equitable opportunity to participate in dual enrollment programs. Following the budgetary cutbacks in the education of the past administration in the Pennsylvanian state, some school districts either denied the program or shifted the tuition cost, fees and books entirely to the students and their families (Milburn, 2015, n.p). Black and low-income students often have less participation in dual enrollment programs due to economic constraints and inadequate preparation. The worse affected areas are poor neighborhoods, communities and school districts where most of the Black students come from (Velasquez, Andre, Shanks, & Meyer, 2014).

Again, dual enrollment programs do not have a unified means of funding across all the states in the U.S. In some states, the decision is locally made while in others the state takes the decision. In some state, the students take dual enrollment courses free of charge (Hoffman, 2005) while in others they are required to pay (McCarthy, 1999). Hoffman (2005) proposal that “funding mechanism be based on the principle of no cost to students and no harm to partnering institutions” is far from being realized. Hence, following the budget cutbacks in the education of the past administration in the Pennsylvanian state, some school districts in Allegheny County denied the programs while others shifted the

burden of the tuition cost, fees and books entirely to the students and their families.

Hence, while well to do families can seek out post-secondary educational opportunities for their children and pay for it and build a record of credits for their children, many low-income students who might benefit from the program cannot do so (Hoffman, 2005; McCarthy, 1999).

Meanwhile, dual enrollment has no equal access for all eligible students across every state's schools. In most states including Pennsylvania, dual enrollment though permitted is not mandated (Hoffman, 2005). This is a policy issue. Therefore, some high schools and colleges choose to participate while others do not. There are needs for change in the opportunity of all the students especially Black and low-income students. This will happen through some structural changes in the system.

Thus far, we have reflected on the social justice issues following the social policies and institutional practices that constitute barriers to Black students who will benefit from dual enrollment programs. Some of these policies, procedures, and practices systematically though inadvertently constitute barriers to Black students because of who they are. They range from beliefs, attitudes, and practices that are not edifying to Black students as well as the burden of the cost of participation in dual enrollment programs. Every system is perfectly designed to yield the result it delivers (Langley, Moen, Nolan, Nolan, Norman, & Provost, 2009, p.79). There is a need for a change in the system, structure, as well as institution in terms of policies and practices. These changes can begin in small measures which with time will amount to the transformation of the entire system. However, the changes should be adapted to the geography and ecology of the specific colleges and high schools. It should be matched with the capacity, commitment,

and confidence of agents, intermediaries, and beneficiaries of the change. Practitioners of dual enrollment and other stakeholders in education industry are more likely to make the sacrifices necessary to ensure equitable participation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment as they become convinced of the overall goal of dual enrollment to the entire society together with the costs and dangers of its alternative.

Research plan to measure improvement

One cannot improve at scale what the person cannot measure (Mintrop, 2016). There are two dual enrollment programs in Pittsburgh region of South Western Pennsylvania, which I have hitherto referred pseudonymously as College Now of Regent University and College in High School of Zenith University, who are trying to beat the odds and meet the needs of Black and low-income students. The research findings are helping to drive improvement based on evidence. The data will also help to measure the level of improvement with the passage of time.

At Alpha high school which partners with College Based programs, the finding indicates that while White students make up 63% of their entire student population, they are participating at the rate of 67% in dual enrollment program of the school. While Black students make up 27% of the entire high school population at Alpha high school, they constitute only 11% of the dual enrollment participants from high school. With regard to socioeconomic status, while high-poverty students constitute 56% of the participants of the Alpha high school dual enrollment, the students with low-poverty level make up 44% of the participants of the same school. In a similar manner, in Delta high school that partner with College in High School, while White students make up 91% of the entire high school, they make up 95% of the students of the high school who are

taking part in dual enrollment programs. Asian students made up 1% of the high school student population of the school, but are participating at 3% in dual enrollment programs of the school. While Black students make up 6% of the entire population of the Delta high school, they are participating only at 2%. Hence, while White students and Asian students are overrepresented in dual enrollment programs, the Black students remain underrepresented. In terms of a socio-economic matrix, in Delta high school while only 16% of students with high poverty statuses are participating, 84% of students from lower poverty statuses are participating. Hence, Black students and low-income students remain underrepresented in dual enrollment programs.

The use of disciplined inquiry to drive practice improvement

The improvement plan that I am proposing is like a road map or GPS. With it, the trajectory to carrying out the activities, events, and project becomes loud and clear. The importance of this study rests upon its advocacy for adequate preparation, broader access, quality opportunity, and comprehensive support systems that make for college and career readiness for Black and low-income students. It will increase greater cooperation and collaboration between universities and their partnering high schools that will get universities more involved in preparing students to qualify for dual enrollment programs. It may lead to GPA requirement that will not be too low to lower standard nor too high to make it difficult for Black and low-income students to qualify for the programs. It addresses the problem of inequity in education between White and Black students.

The practitioners will be interested in my dissertation in practice because it does not only provide the merit and worth of the programs but also provides interventions that will influence major decision-making, increase efficacy, lead to an improvement in the

policies and practices of the programs. The researcher will know that these changes are actually bringing improvement when they begin to drive down the number of Black and low-income students dropping out of school and drive up the number of Black and low-income students participating in dual enrollment programs. When more teachers and parents begin to take more interest in dual enrollment programs, preparing and supporting their students and children to participate in dual enrollment programs.

Spreading and acceleration of learning through networked communities

The social problem has neither a magic bullet nor silver lining but can be improved upon. The improvement plan for this strategic project rests on networked improvement communities (NIC) based on the interplay of the academia, school and the community. It is not a solution imposed from outside but one generated from within. It has no top-down approach but bottoms up approach. A strong partnership is important among the college, high school, families, business community, non-governmental organizations, and government agencies to tackle the problem of inadequate preparation of Black and low-income students and poor funding of dual enrollment programs. They are networked improvement communities of the academia, schools and community partners working separately as well as in collaboration with each other to achieve the common objectives of equitable participation and success of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs.

Building a legacy of interested system capacity to improve

Ab intio my intuitive theory of action was to lay the problem at the feet of the students of color and their families. “Most often, problem solvers develop their intuitive theories of action implicitly and semiconsciously. People awaken their intuitive

capacities and problem-solving skills by making their intuitive theories of action explicit” (Mintrop, 2016, p.55). With the passage of time, the researcher had a paradigm shift in approach. The emphasis turned to the system and structures that make it harder for Black students, low-income students, and their families to cope with the social problems of inadequate educational preparation and lack of sufficient funding of dual enrollment programs. Instead of laying the problem at the feet of the Black and low-income students and their families and communities the problem was ultimately traced to the social, political, economic and cultural matrixes that have created the disparity in education between White and high-income on the one hand, and Black and low-income students on the other hand. “Intuition produces an understanding that can only be backed up with fuzzy empirical observation and associative justifications. Rationality applies sequential logic, measurement, and analysis” (Mintrop, 2016, p.55).

This shift in emphasis and orientation is at the heart of social justice as it borders on the structural injustice and inequity that continue to fuel the problem of underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. Otherwise, it will amount to what Ryan (1971) phrased as “blaming the victims” for their marginalization and exclusion. It becomes challenging to rise “...beyond conventional strategies and develop novel approaches...” (Mintrop, 2016, p.55).

The research improvement plan serves as a roadmap which when properly executed will yield magnificent results. Equity-relevant improvements in education are abstruse involving technical innovation, ethical reorientation, political struggle, motivation, risk-taking and courage (Mintrop, 2016, p.1). There is a need for a more affirmative and resilient view of students of color by their educators. Practical design development and

design development studies hold the key to improvement in educational problems (Mintrop, 2016). Development design for improvement is at the interplay of intuition and rationality (Mintrop, 2016). Bryk, Gomez, Grunow, and Lemahieu (2015) states thus: “to advance continuous improvement, data must be collected frequently to identify opportunities for change and to assess whether positive changes are in fact occurring” (p.100).

These activities and processes for improvement will be carried out through the plan-do-study-act (PDSA) inquiry cycle. The following contains coordinated actions and future course of action. Underrepresentation of Black students and low-income students constitute a real social problem. It is proportionately high when compared to that of their White and high-income counterparts. This was a wakeup call stage for me.

Initially, it was my intention to tackle the problem from several fronts such as lack of parental care and rudiments of home training, bad peer influence, and poor neighborhood. However, with the passage of time, my focus began to shift in both orientation and emphasis. This paradigm shift took place at the stage of my getting ready due to a review of the seminal literature, prolific writings, and consultation with professors who are versed on social justice issues. Instead of laying the problem at the feet of the Black and low-income students, their families and communities, the researcher were able to view the problem from a critical conscious perspective. In the long run, the undesirable effects experienced by the Black and low-income students, their families and communities are traceable to unjust social, political, economic and cultural structures. More so, the poor self-concept, poor neighborhood and even parental struggles are traceable to oppressive social structures and systems. This shift in emphasis and orientation is at the heart of

social justice as it borders on the structural injustice and inequity that continue to fuel the problem of underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. Hence, I started reaching out to collaborate with other stakeholders on my strategic problem of practice.

5.3.0 Collaboration with others: Action now and future course of Action

The researcher has solicited the participation of other stakeholders-administrators, educators, staff, guidance counselors, students, parents, and external agents through personal contacts, letter writing and e-mails to brief them on the strategic project of my practice. They are interested in working with me because these stakeholders are in one way or the other already involved in the business of working for the education of the underserved youth. It is a matter of social justice to draw attention to underserved Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs.

The stakeholders have what it takes in terms of knowledge, skills, capacity, support, and resources to make a big difference. They can make a difference in the education of Black and low-income youth in ensuring their college and career readiness through dual enrollment programs. School policies, programs, and practices often improve with parental involvement and advocacy. Dual enrollment program is no exception. They are interested in helping me to solve the problem because of the excellent benefits that dual enrollment programs afford. The improvement practice requires a bottom-top approach and a teamwork effort capable of producing synergic effects. It is not a problem with an easy and quick fix but requires collaborative efforts from all stakeholders-students, schools, academia, governmental, non-governmental organizations, faith-based and community organizations.

The underrepresentation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment is part of the huge problem of educational disparity between the White and the Black people. It is a systemic and structural problem and requires all hands on deck. It is an advocacy that enlists the agency of individuals, families, communities, organizations, institutions, the media, and policymakers in order to make the desired impact. This has led me to a community building stage. Together we can make the change. Our main aim is leadership that can be practiced by anyone in any kind of movement, community, organization, or institution (Preskill & Brookfield, 2009). “Leadership is not necessarily a function of a hierarchy or bureaucracy; nor does a single person in a position of authority have to exercise it” (Preskill & Brookfield, 2009, p.3).

The researcher has had the opportunity to engage with the Professor and Director of College-Based programs, and graduate students, Education Department of Regent University in the spring of 2015 on the issue of dual enrollment and college and career readiness. One has engaged in a dialogue circle with the Directorate of College in High School-Based programs in 2015 to learn more about their dual enrollment programs. The researcher is collaborating with the Director of College-Based programs of Regent University, and Director of College in High School-Based programs of Zenith University. The researcher will continue to explore opportunities to share information with colleges and high schools about the efficacy of dual enrollment and to learn from other scholars and researchers. It is our hope to use every opportunity to advocate for equitable participation of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs as well as encourage professional development based on racial justice, equity, empowerment of students and educators as moral agents and social reformers.

At this stage, our community of advocates through the umbrella: “Underserved Students Dual Enrollment Initiative” (US-DEI) are making an effort to ensure pluralistic inclusiveness. According to Preskill and Brookfield (2009), leaders ought to be “...committed to creating environments for healthy, fully realized human beings by ensuring that relationships were inclusive, empowering, and respectful” (p.213). It involves the collaborative efforts of schools, families, communities, organizations, agencies, and academia. The experiences, perspective, and insight of professional educators, administrators, program directors, teachers, instructors, Guidance-counselors, parents, and students are a critical part of this initiative. Others are researchers, external agents, leaders of community-based organizations and faith-based organizations.

Furthermore, I am looking forward to coalescing and effecting change with regard to my strategic problem of practice. At the stage of coalescing, we realize that unity is a strength. “We may organize, plan actions, lobby, do fundraising, educate and motivate members of the uninvolved public” (Harro, 2013, p.623). We see ourselves as one in a just cause. We refuse to accept privileges, powers, or play the victim. At this stage, we have transformed our energy from anger to hope, power and optimism while working and organizing to make a difference (Harro, 2013).

In order to effect the desired change, the metaphor used by Heath and Heath (2011) comes readily to mind namely (i) Direct the Rider (head understanding) (ii) Motivate the Elephant (heart motivation) and (iii) shape the Path (hands action). I think for any change to be effective it must occur in the head (direction), heart (motivation) and hands (action) of individuals, institutions, and society. The achievement of some of these activities and proposals will be in the short term, others in the mid-term and the rest in the long term.

They aim at helping the researcher to arrive at the desired change or at least some improvement and sustenance of the change.

5.4.0 Design Improvement Logic Model

“Underserved Students Dual Enrollment Initiative” (US-DEI) in collaboration with the following stakeholders will be working to achieve the desired change. They include as follows:

Resources/ In-Puts

- **Human Resources:** The study of these two dual enrollment programs in the light of transformative paradigm will look up to the students, their parents or persons *in loco parentis* and their families as stakeholders and as human resource agents. Others are directors/ coordinators of the programs, school administrators, teachers, educators, guidance counselor, social workers, and advisors both from high schools and from colleges. The study will involve some members of informed community groups such as Community-based organizations (CBOs) and Faith-based organizations (FBOs) in the ongoing study and dissemination of the findings. Underserved Students Dual Enrollment Initiative (USDEI) shall continue to recruit practitioners, faculty, staff, students and their families for ongoing learning and implementation of findings.
- **Material Resources:** Administrative dataset and archival documents were obtained from the Directorate of the programs: College Based of Regent University and College in High School of Zenith University to study the features and components of the programs.
- **Financial Resources:** In the meantime, the funding of the project will be personal. However, with the passage of time “Underserved Students Dual Enrollment Initiative”

(US-DEI) group may seek funding from philanthropists and charitable agencies in order to realize both the mid-term and long terms goals of this strategic project.

Activities

- This study designed and administered survey/questionnaires, and interview protocols to students, administrators, and guidance counselors on the impact of the programs as well as the dynamics that promote equitable recruitment and success of Black and low-income students in the dual enrollment programs.
- This strategic project will involve the organization of seminars, lectures, symposia, and conferences on the benefits of dual enrollment meant to promote dual enrollment programs to high school students and their families especially in the underserved areas, communities and school districts.
- Modern social media such as email, twitter, Facebook and so on shall be employed in creating and boosting critical awareness of the programs.
- USDEI shall seek and help in organizing professional development programs for practitioners, administrators, educators on race, equity and inclusion in dual enrollment programs.
- USDEI shall sponsor and submit bills that will inform good policies on dual enrollment in Pennsylvania State and beyond.
- USDEI shall continue to write Op-ed, briefs, commentaries, executive summaries on the benefits of dual enrollment.

Outputs

- The study acquired data and information on the dynamics that promote equitable participation and success of Black students and low-income students as well as the

impact of dual enrollment on student-participants through survey/questionnaire, and interview protocols.

- It will bring about improved knowledge and greater awareness about dual enrollment programs to the students, their families, and the public while soliciting support for social justice and equity in dual enrollment programs.
- It will lead to improved knowledge and better awareness about equity, inclusion and social justice in dual enrollment programs for practitioners, administrators, educators, and school service personnel.

Short, mid and long-term outcomes

- Short-term goals (1-3 years): The expectation is that in the short term this project shall result in a decrease in the number of Black students and students from low-income families dropping out of high schools.
- Mid-term goals (4-6 years): In the mid-term, it will result in an increase in the number of well-prepared Black students with improved self-adequacy who are college and career ready.
- Long-term goals: It shall bring about an increase in the number of Black and low-income students who are college and career ready and able to transit to college through dual enrollment programs.
- It will result in the validation of the program's practices as well as an improvement in the policies and practices of dual enrollment as equity-oriented programs.

Impacts/ Expectations

- It will bring about an increase in the number of Black and low-income students who are graduating from four-year and two-year postsecondary institutions without remediation.
- It will result in a greater number of Black graduates who have the requisite knowledge, skills and capacity for 21st-century jobs, enhanced well-being and capacity to contribute to U.S global economic competitiveness.
- It will bring about a greater number of well-developed Black graduates who are critical reformers, life-long learners, good citizens, and informed members of modern democratic society.

5.5.0 Leadership Improvement Action for Transformation of the Problem

A democratic process of improvement in this problem of practice will be a situation where all the relevant stakeholders including those with influence and those who are under-served will have a voice. It will be democratic if the opinions, views, and perspectives of all stakeholders-professional educators, government officials, parents, and students matter. This is not a top-bottom approach solution. It is rather a collective, democratic solution. According to Preskill and Brookfield (2009), it involves the capacity and volition to entertain a variety of opinion, be open to the contributions of others irrespective of their previous attainments or current status, and create a dialectical community with an open exchange of ideas.

The problem needs the people of influence with intellectual prowess to provide the theory, theoretical framework, and data as well as communities, families, and students themselves to provide experiences. “Experiences do not teach us much until we probe

into their meanings” (Preskill & Brookfield, 2009, p. 105). Without the theory of academia, the issue will be visionless, but without the experiences of the ordinary Black and low-income youths, it will be empty and void. It is not a solution to be fashioned independent of the experiences of students and their families. It will be people oriented solution, not an abstract one. A more authentic democratic solution will be the one that reconciles the two aisles of the divide the upper echelon and those at the ordinary level in order to arrive at a more balanced solution.

5.6.0 Implications for Future Research

Moreover, the study of this nature based on purposeful sampling rather than randomized one cannot be said to be the perfect typical representative of the whole population of former students or even the dual enrollment programs. Again, given the limited number of participants and high schools who are involved in the study, it may not be easy to generalize the conclusions. However, the findings are valid and could be applicable to other dual enrollment programs in any region. In other words, the findings can be scaled up to other dual enrollment programs to boost the recruitment, participation, and success of Black and low-income students anywhere.

These questions present more opportunities for further studies. They are as follows: Are these dual enrollment students being successful in college? What is their graduation rate? Are they finishing on time? Are they making it from the small data that we have access to when they leave their high schools? It will be nice having access to the outcome if they are successful in college and gainfully employed after college and so on. These are some of the areas that require further investigation.

5.7.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusively, Black students and low-income students are underrepresented in dual enrollment programs nationally, regionally and in some places locally. This trend is not good for social mobility, economic development, and national security. However, it is heartwarming that there are some programs which are keeping abreast with theory and research, and opening up the opportunity of dual enrollment programs to a broad spectrum of students. College-Based programs of Regent University and College in High School-Based programs of Zenith University are doing well in these areas.

College-Based programs of Regent University and College in High School-Based programs of Zenith University are providing dual enrollment students with adequate preparation, broader access, quality opportunity, academic, financial, and psycho-social supports that make for equitable participation, persistence, and success of Black and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. Other components they have are a congenial learning environment, familial/community engagement, efficacy and close collaboration between high school and post-secondary institution which are rewarding. These are components, and strategies have been found to be the mechanisms that make for equitable access and success of Black students and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. These ten components and features are quite essential for any dual enrollment program to be accessible and feasible for Black students and students from low-income families.

A broad spectrum of students such as high ability students, average students, emerging students, White students, Black students, high-income students, and low-

income students have some opportunities to participate in dual enrollment due to the support systems that are provided in these programs for students to become successful. Black students and low-income students are acquiring academic skills and other soft skills such as how to prioritize, self-adequacy, co-operative learning, motivation, maturity, independent spirit, hard-work ethics, resilience, time management, freedom and responsibility that make for college and career readiness. These soft skills coupled with academic aptitude are repositioning students to acquire the knowledge, capacities, and competencies that are needed for 21st-century job acquisition, wealth creation, economic development, and global competitiveness. There is a need for educators, student support personnel, families, communities, academia, policymakers, and the media to work toward equitable participation of Black and low-income youth in dual enrollment programs. Stakeholders for the costs of their services, efforts, time, talents and treasures will reap fat earnings for families, low unemployment, increased tax income for viable local economies, reduced dependency, redoubled civic engagement and greater security for neighborhood exposed to the danger of violence (Hawkins, 2011).

Recommendations

Colleges/ Universities

- (1) There is a need for more support strategies for Black students and low-income students prior, and during the period of their dual enrollment programs.
- (2) Broad-based access is pertinent for colleges and universities as they consider every ethnic, socio-economic status, academic and career-bound student without lowering the standard but rather offering incentives that will inspire and motivate students to opt for dual enrollment programs.

- (3) It may be ethically appropriate to find a way to be involved in preparing students especially Black students and students from low-income families from their freshman year to qualify for dual enrollment programs.
- (4) There is a need to align standard, course content, credit, grades, instructional time, and school calendars between Colleges and high schools to ensure courses are not duplicated.
- (5) Moreover, if the mission of dual enrollment is to improve the fortune of the underrepresented, underserved, under-resourced students and their communities, higher institutions must assume shared responsibility with high school in piloting students successfully from one educational level to the next one.
- (6) There is a need for professional development activities for educators to ensure the application of differentiated instruction for equity and justice in dual enrollment programs.
- (7) There is a need to offer academic, social, and financial support to Black and low-income students and scaffold them to success.

High Schools

- (1) Validating agents from a multiplicity of sources both familial and non-familial are ultimately those who make high school students to develop interest and flair for dual enrollment programs.
- (2) Once the students have been recruited to participate in dual enrollment programs adequate preparation for the students and their families become necessary as it is a new experience which is totally different from what they usually have.

- (3) The middle school, especially grades 7th and 8th seem to be the most appropriate time to start talking to school age children about the importance of dual enrollment programs and the need to participate in it. This will be as from about age 11, which corresponds with an age of window of opportunities.
- (4) There is a need to intentionally target the ethnic minorities and students from low-income families in dual enrollment programs. There are no such things as color-blindness when it comes to diversity and equity in dual enrollment programs with regard to Black students and students from low-income status.
- (5) More so, dual enrollment programs should be provided with adequate financial, academic and psycho-social supports necessary for universal students' success.
- (6) Incorporating the home and community culture of Black and low-income students into school culture will go a long way in closing opportunity gap between mainstream students and underserved student populations (Au, 2011).
- (7) Professional development activities for educators on the issue of racial justice and equity, as well as academic, social, and financial support for Black and low-income students, are pertinent.
- (8) There is a need to make use of differentiated instruction to reach all students rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Students, Families, and Communities

Parents and person in *loco parentis* should begin to take more interest in dual enrollment programs, preparing and supporting their children and wards to participate in dual enrollment programs.

Government & Policy-makers

- (1) Legislators and policymakers should articulate the mission of dual enrollment programs to serve a broad range of students including advanced and emerging students.
- (2) In order that all eligible students may have access to dual enrollment programs in the state, dual enrollment programs should not just be permitted but mandatory for all high schools to offer the opportunity. And, the State should mandate all high schools and all post-secondary institutions to participate in dual enrollment programs.
- (3) There is a need to develop a state-mandated course equivalency system which will make it mandatory for all universities and colleges within the state to accept dual enrollment program credit.
- (4) In order to support Black students and students from low-income families in their transition to college, state governments should offer a scholarship as motivation for the underserved student populations.
- (5) There is a need for equitable taxation and fair funding of education in general and dual enrollment programs in particular.
- (6) The proposal of Hoffman (2005) that dual enrollment programs should come at no cost to the students, their families and no harm to partnering institution should be seriously considered.

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Appendix A: Survey for Practitioners (Administrators & counselors)

DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS SURVEY

Thank you for taking this survey!

I am conducting a research study looking at two dual enrollment programs in the Pittsburgh area. This study is being conducted under the auspices of the Department of Educational Foundations and Leadership of Duquesne University.

This study aims at increasing our understanding of the dynamics that promote equitable recruitment, persistence, and success of Black students and students from low-income families that are participating in local dual enrollment programs. It will focus on experiences of diverse student populations- Black and White students and high-income, mid-income and low-income students who have successfully graduated from either one or the other of these programs.

The purpose of this survey is to gather information from practitioners such as yourself. In particular, we would also like to gather your thoughts and insights on how to create more equity-oriented programs that promote both inclusion, diversity, and success for underserved students.

Demographic Characteristics of the Dual Enrollment Programs' Participants

Questions 1, and 2 below are adapted with slight modifications from Museus, Lutovsky & Colbeck (2007).

- (1) What are the demographic characteristics of the high school students in general and dual enrollment students in particular, in your institution in 2017/ 2018 academic year in terms of their numbers?

Race/ Ethnicity	Total High school students	Number in dual Enrollment
(a) White		
(b) African-American (Black)		
(c) Asian/ Pacific Islander		
(d) Latino (a)		
(e) Native American		
(f) Other		

- (2) How many of the students participating in dual enrollment programs in your institution for the 2017/18 academic year are on free or reduced lunch and how many do not receive free or reduced lunches?

High School participants	Number on reduced or free lunch	Number of those who are not

- (3) Please explain briefly why your institution offers dual enrollment programs?

Appendix B: Dual Enrollment Interview Questions for Student Participants

Personal characteristics:

- (1) What is your age?
- (2) What are the names of your dual enrollment program and high school?
- (3) How many college credits did you earn while in high school?
- (4) Have you completed college, and if so, what job are you doing now?

Recruitment and selection:

- (1) In what grade did you first hear about dual enrollment programs?
- (2) How did you find out about your school's dual enrollment programs?
- (3) How much time were you given to plan for it?
- (4) What difficulties, if any, did you encounter completing the application process?
- (5) How were you notified of your application status?
- (6) Was it in a timely fashion?
- (7) What were the next steps you followed?
- (8) When should students start preparing to enroll in dual enrollment programs?

Reasons for your participation:

- (1) Why did you participate in dual enrollment programs while in high school?
- (2) Who, if any, were the key people involved in your decision to participate in the programs?

Your experiences in the program:

- (1) To what extent did your college courses prepare you for a college education while you were in high school and what could have prepared you better?
- (2) How did "College Now" or "College in High School" offer you opportunities to become familiar with other programs, activities, or events of your participating college?
- (3) What challenges and obstacles did you encounter before and while participating in the programs?
- (4) What are similarities and differences, if any, between your high school and dual enrollment programs experiences?
- (5) What did you expect and how has the dual enrollment programs met your expectations? Please explain why or why not.
- (6) Will you recommend dual enrollment to other Black and low-income students?

Program support services:

- (1) Describe any support services you received in the course of participating in dual enrollment programs including mentoring, counseling, advising, tutoring, financial aids, college application process, and others. How often did you receive them?

(2) Can you describe the relationship between you and your colleagues in “College Now” or “College in High School”?

(3) What are the things you find most helpful while participating in dual enrollment programs?

(4) Given the opportunity, what changes will you like to see for bettering your chances and that of other Black students and low-income students in “College Now” or “College in High School”?

Program outcomes:

(1). How has “College Now” or “College in High School” benefitted you, your family, and the community?

(2). Did your high school grades get better or worse when you started dual enrollment programs?

(3). How did your participation in the dual enrollment programs change your perception of college, what influence did it have, if any, in your attendance of a particular college or university?

Appendix C: Dual Enrollment Interview Questions for Practitioners

Programs information, recruitment, and selection:

- (1) How do the university and its affiliate high schools approach marketing and information dissemination on College Now or College in High School?
- (2) How does College Now or College in High School recruit, and select students to participate in dual enrollment programs?
- (3) What kind of students are selected to participate in your dual enrollment programs?

Policy matters: Collaboration, and funding.

- (1) How do your high school and the college collaborate?
- (2) What regulations exist that support or hinder your efforts at the equitable participation of Black students, and low-income students in your dual enrollment programs?
- (3) What are your costs participating in dual enrollment programs and how do you meet them?

Programs support services:

- (1) What college courses do students take and where?
- (2) How do you get students ready to begin college coursework?
- (3) Who teaches the college courses, and how are they selected and supported?
- (4) What are the strategies, and practices in use to support students prior to selection, and during the selection process?
- (5) What factors, strategies, and practices do you use to support Black students, and low-income students in dual enrollment programs?

Programs' outcomes:

- (1) What impact do dual enrollment and its college courses have on participating students and what motivation if any to achieve in college and beyond?
- (2) How does dual enrollment affect your school and college?
- (3) How will you know if your programs are meeting their stated objectives?

APPENDIX D: Consent form for students



DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

600 FORBES AVENUE ♦ PITTSBURGH, PA 15282

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

TITLE: Enhancing Access and Success of Underserved Students in Dual Enrollment Programs.

INVESTIGATOR: Theodore Mbaegbu, a doctoral student of Educational Foundations and Leadership, Duquesne University.

ADVISOR: Dr. Gary Shank, Professor; School of Education, Department of Educational Foundations and Leadership.

SOURCE OF SUPPORT: This study is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctoral degree of Educational Leadership at Duquesne University.

PURPOSE: This is a request that you participate in a research project that seeks to investigate the features, strategies, and practices that promote equitable participation of Black students, and students from low-income families in dual enrollment programs based on the lived experiences of Black and low-income students, as well as seeking information and perspectives from the Program practitioners. Dual enrollment programs enable high school students to register for, study in, and obtain college credits while in high school that prepares them for college and career readiness. Should you volunteer to participate, you will be interviewed. You may also be requested to participate in follow up focus groups. Participation in focus groups is strictly voluntary.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: By your participation in this study on dual enrollment, you will be providing vital information, perception, experience, and knowledge about the components, factors, strategies, policies and practices that make for equitable participation of Black students and low-income students in dual enrollment and their resultant effects on their college and career readiness and success. The study when completed is intended to provide invaluable knowledge, perspectives and insights about the recruitment and success of Black students and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. This information is intended to help educational leaders, practitioners, educators, students, counselors, researchers, and policy makers to improve the dual enrollment process and experience.

The research study does not anticipate putting you in any risk by participating that is greater than those encountered in normal everyday life. However, the interview will take approximately 45 minutes. The focus group may last for about 50 minutes. You are free to

participate in either one or both of them. As a benefit, the study expects to improve equitable participation of Black students, and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. It will increase an awareness pertaining college-high school partnership programs, and how best to grant broad access to Black students and low-income students in dual enrollment programs for their college and career readiness and success.

COMPENSATION: Your participation in the study is a voluntary one with no material compensation. However, participation in the project will not incur any monetary cost to you.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Your name will never appear on any survey or research instruments. There is no use of identification in the data analysis. All written materials and consent forms will be stored in a locked file in the researcher's advisor office. Your response(s) will only appear in statistical and qualitative data summaries. The destruction of all retrieved data will be five years after the completion of the research.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW: You are under no obligation to participate in this study. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate at any time. If you do withdraw, your responses will not be used in the study.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS: The supply of the summary of the results of this research will be at no cost to you and upon request.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT: I have read the above statements and its request is clear to me. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time, for any reason. On these terms, I certify that I am willing to participate in this research project.

I understand that should I have any further questions about my participation in this study, I may contact Theo Mbaegbu or Dr. Gary Shank or Dr. David Delmonico, Chair of the Duquesne University Institutional Review Board.

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

Advisor's Signature

Date

APPENDIX E: Consent form for program practitioners



DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

600 FORBES AVENUE ♦ PITTSBURGH, PA 15282

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

TITLE: Enhancing Access and Success of Underserved Students in Dual Enrollment Programs.

INVESTIGATOR: Theodore Mbaegbu, doctoral student of Educational Foundations and Leadership, Duquesne University.

ADVISOR: Dr. Gary Shank, Professor; School of Education, Department of Educational Foundations and Leadership.

SOURCE OF SUPPORT: This study is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctoral degree of Educational Leadership at Duquesne University.

PURPOSE: This is a request that you participate in a research project that seeks to investigate the features, strategies, and practices that promote equitable participation of Black students, and students from low-income families in dual enrollment programs based on the lived experiences of Black and low-income students, as well as seeking information and perspectives from the Program practitioners. Dual enrollment programs enable high school students to register for, study in, and obtain college credits while in high school that prepares them for college and career readiness.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: By your participation in this study on dual enrollment, you will be providing vital information, perception, experience, and knowledge about the components, factors, strategies, policies and practices that make for equitable participation of Black students and low-income students in dual enrollment and their resultant effects on their college and career readiness and success. The study when completed is intended to provide invaluable knowledge, perspectives, and insights about the recruitment and success of Black students and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. This information is intended to help educational leaders, practitioners, educators, students, counselors, researchers, and policymakers to improve the dual enrollment process and experience.

The research study does not anticipate putting you in any risk by participating that is greater than those encountered in normal everyday life. Should you volunteer to participate, you will be interviewed and may fill in a brief survey/questionnaire as an administrator or a teacher. The structure of the surveys/ questionnaires is such that they will take approximately 20 minutes. However, the interview will take approximately 45 minutes.

You may also be requested to participate in a follow-up focus group. The focus group interview may last for about 50 minutes. You are free to participate in either one or both interviews. Participation in focus groups is strictly voluntary.

As a benefit, the study expects to improve the equitable participation of Black students, and low-income students in dual enrollment programs. It will increase an awareness pertaining to college-high school partnership programs, and how best to grant broad access to Black students and low-income students in dual enrollment programs for their college and career readiness and success.

COMPENSATION: Your participation in the study is a voluntary one with no material compensation. However, participation in the project will not incur any monetary cost to you.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Your name will never appear on any survey or research instruments. There is no use of identification in the data analysis. All written materials and consent forms will be stored in a locked file in the researcher's advisor office. Your response(s) will only appear in statistical and qualitative data summaries. The destruction of all retrieved data will be five years after the completion of the research.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW: You are under no obligation to participate in this study. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate at any time. If you do withdraw, your responses will not be used in the study.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS: The supply of the summary of the results of this research will be at no cost to you and upon request.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT: I have read the above statements and its request is clear to me. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time, for any reason. On these terms, I certify that I am willing to participate in this research project.

I understand that should I have any further questions about my participation in this study, I may contact Theo Mbaegbu or Dr. Gary Shank or Dr. David Delmonico, Chair of the Duquesne University Institutional Review Board.

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

Advisor's Signature

Date